

The Last Days of Elián: Derbyshire, Falcoff, O'Beirne, The Editors

NATIONAL REVIEW

Worse Than Clinton

**THE NIGHTMARE OF
PRESIDENT GORE**

by Noemie Emery

PLUS:

Ramesh Ponnuru: Bush's Death Penalty

Ronald Radosh: Michael Harrington's A

Andrew Sullivan: The Mystery of Pontius

Jonah Goldberg: The Wonder of The Simpsons

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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■ LETTERS ■

HOW TO RUN

Gov. Bush would do well to heed much of the advice given him in your symposium ("What Now?" April 3) if he wants to defeat Al Gore in November. I disagree, however, with Daniel Casse's assertion that the words integrity, honor, and character "should have no role in George W. Bush's campaign." Casse argues that because past anti-Clinton campaigns based on these issues failed, Republicans should abandon them entirely. The full magnitude of Clinton's corruption and immorality did not come to light until after the start of his second term. Bush should stress how his plans for America's future are better than Al Gore's and make the moral argument against the corruption of the Clinton-Gore White House. Bush must not assume that he can win the presidency solely by vowing to stop the rising price of gasoline.

John P. Alexander
Manhasset, N.Y.

THE PROBLEM WITH DR. LAURA

John Derbyshire's intellectual quackery is cute ("Dr. Laura Non Grata," April 17). If the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation were as mighty as Derbyshire claims, Dr. Laura would not be promiscuously promoting her homophobic views on television. Moreover, why is Derbyshire upset that gays refuse to be a punching bag for Dr. Laura? Doesn't the spirit of frank debate give people the right to criticize those who seek to defame them? I don't recall conservatives condemning the Catholic League for its campaign against television shows that it deemed offensive. Since the First Amendment applies to gays too, they don't have to silently suffer bigoted slurs or passively accept the right wing's deliberate campaign of misinformation. The day heterosexuals are barred from the military, marriage, and the Boy Scouts is when I will stomach their whining about gay suppression and tyranny.

James A. Kernochan
New York, N.Y.

DISEASE WITHOUT IDEOLOGY

Regarding Ramesh Ponnuru's "Inner Darkness" (April 3): As a conservative

and a Paxiled-up writer, I always instinctively felt that writing about my mental illness was somehow betraying my conservative beliefs for the fluffiness of an Oprah moment. Yet no writer would be accused of being philosophically weak for writing about his affliction with cancer. We suffer from and die of depression and instability as we die of cancer and stroke; the trouble that conservatives have in recognizing this is the current pop-culture chicness of mental illness. If cancer were popular among liberal and overly dramatic teenagers, would we take it any less seriously?

Kate Blake
Searcy, Ariz.

THE LAW

John J. Miller's "Votes for Felons" (April 3) discloses some interesting facts about a serious issue. A clarification is necessary, however: Federal law does not call for a "mandatory five-year sentence" for felons who are caught possessing firearms illegally. The statute provides a maximum of ten years in prison and does not prohibit a probationary term. The United States sentencing guidelines narrow the actual sentencing range available to a district court, and this range depends on myriad factors, including the type of firearm involved and the seriousness of the offender's criminal record. Under the guidelines, the lightest sentence generally available is five months in prison, plus another five months of home detention under the supervision of a probation officer.

Phillip K. Williams
Radford, Va.

CANADA'S SECRET WEAPON

Thanks very much for "The Media's George W." by Mark Steyn (April 3). I laughed out loud while reading it. Although Steyn is Canadian, he displays a fine feel for the hypocrisy of the American media—along with a finely honed sense of humor and superb writing skills. If I knew how to get the attention of George W. Bush, I'd strongly advise that he hire Steyn as a speechwriter. The results might be spectacular.

Brother James M. Boyle
Middletown, Conn.



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■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ “The only way they could win is to convince [people] that we’re the first cousins of space aliens,” says President **Clinton** at fundraiser for **Hillary**. . . . More Bill: “You have the right-wing venom machine all geared up against her again.” . . . Even more Bill: “I’m not running for anything. Most days, I’m okay about that.” . . . *Washington Post* columnist **Al Kamen**, after readers sent in their ideas on federal buildings to name after Clinton: “The most common suggestion was . . . the Blue Plains sewage-treatment plant.” . . . Clinton, on GOP critics, in *U.S. News & World Report*: “One of their great strengths is . . . they have no guilt and no shame.” . . . **Ken Starr**’s investigation cost more than \$52 million, says GAO, and total cost of all independent-counsel investigations during Clinton administration nears \$100 million.

■ CNBC’s *Hardball* host **Chris Matthews**: “Is Cuba a free country?” Rep. **José Serrano** (D., N.Y.): “It’s a sovereign country.” Matthews: “Is it a free country?” Serrano: “It’s a country with a different system from ours.” Matthews: “Is it a free country?” Serrano: “I don’t know if it’s a free country. I don’t live there.” Later, Matthews asks: “Do they allow freedom of speech?” Serrano: “Sure.”

■ “I’m sort of supporting **Al Gore**, which is bizarre,” says **Dee Snider**, singer for washed-up rock group *Twisted Sister*, whose lyrics **Tipper Gore** criticized during 1980s. “I don’t trust the guy as far as I can throw him.” . . . Sen. **Evan Bayh** (D., Ind.) on predictions he’ll be Gore’s running mate: “While the speculation is certainly understandable, I think it’s premature.” . . . In **Andrew Kohut** poll, **George W. Bush** leads Gore among mothers 52 percent to 41 percent, and among fathers 54 percent to 36 percent, according to *Christian Science Monitor*. . . . Secret Service code name for Bush: *Runner*; for Gore: *Shadow*.

■ **Elizabeth Dole**-for-veep draft campaign begins. Selling point: She’s a woman and “an amazing multi-tasker,” says spokesman. . . . **Gary Bauer**, on

running for president again, in *Colorado Springs Gazette*: “We’ll look at how events unfold and see if it makes sense down the road.” . . . In first three months of year, DNC raises \$26 million, compared with \$24 million for RNC. . . . RNC says it will spend \$7 million to \$10 million on ads courting Hispanic voters this year. . . . Some 50 left-wing groups, including NAACP and NOW, sue Philadelphia for denying them protest permits during GOP convention.

■ Sen. **Phil Gramm** (R., Tex.): “We will have found a sure-fire way to stop the Democrats from spending the surplus—have Republicans spend it first.” . . . Rep. **James Traficant** (D., Ohio) says there is 50–50 chance he will



vote for GOP Speaker following November elections. . . . In public-relations move, Republican legislators in Michigan plan to give away thousands of gun safety locks. . . . Million Mom March organizers, planning Washington demonstration on Mother’s Day, say they expect 100,000 participants. . . . **Gloria Steinem** on feminists reaching out to poor women: “What black churches were to the civil-rights movement in the South, shopping centers could be to the women’s movement.” . . . Lockheed Martin may face penalties of up to \$15 million after State Department says it violated arms-export laws by providing technical information to China. . . . Justice Department decides not to level charges against Pentagon spokesman **Ken Bacon** for releasing information from the private file of **Linda Tripp**. . . . Nearly one-quarter of

public high schools deny military recruiters access to student information or bar them from their campuses, according to *USA Today*. . . . Utah becomes 50th state to recognize Martin Luther King Day.

■ Price of gas will fall to \$1.39 per gallon in September, says Department of Energy. . . . Club for Growth supports conservative opponents of incumbent GOP moderates. To join, visit www.clubforgrowth.org or call (202) 955-5500. . . . Nebraska abortionist **Leroy Carhart** to Associated Press: “I think we’re going to lose this issue eventually—at some point in time, abortion will become illegal in the United States.” . . . Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation donates \$57 million to United Nations Population Fund. . . . New Jersey supreme court says lesbian who helped raise former partner’s twins has parental rights, entitled to visitation. Plaintiff successfully claimed status as “psychological parent” to kids. . . . After two-year investigation, poet laureate **Robert Pinsky** determines **Robert Frost**’s “The Road Not Taken” is America’s favorite poem.

■ **Fidel Castro**, on calls for new Cuban leadership: “We had our transition in 1959.” . . . New Libyan foreign minister tells reporters his country would welcome normal relations with United States. . . . Former German chancellor **Helmut Kohl** celebrates 70th birthday in private, following cancellation of lavish party in Berlin in wake of corruption scandal. . . . Ex-Russian president **Boris Yeltsin** receives \$400-per-month pension, free public transportation, half-price on utilities. . . . To catch rapist, police ask entire male population of the small Australian town of Wee Waa to undergo DNA saliva test. . . . DNA study of rib found in Russia suggests modern humans don’t have Neanderthal ancestors.

■ House majority leader **Dick Army** (R., Tex.), on proposals to break up Microsoft, in *U.S. News & World Report*: “I’d rather break up the Justice Department.”

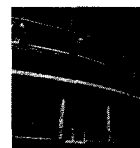
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THE WEEK

■ A woman is alleging that congressman Patrick Kennedy shoved her at LAX. She calls it battery. For a Kennedy, we'd call it progress.

■ A story in the *New York Times*: "Hatred of Castro Feeds Outrage Among Exiles / Communism Still Looms As Evil to Miami Cubans." Is Walter Duranty writing headlines?

■ Several Republicans—notably George W. Bush and Senate majority leader Trent Lott—have been complaining about the length and intrusiveness of the Census form, and have suggested that people with strong objections return the form without answering all the questions. But if the government collects too much information for too many purposes, the answer is corrective legislation rather than civil disobedience (filling out the form is a legal requirement). If the Republicans' suggestion was unwise, however, the reaction to it was hysterical. Newspaper editorialists clucked that Bush and Lott were behaving "irresponsibly" and jeopardizing key functions of government, as though the nation would fall apart if South Dakota failed to receive an exactly proportionate share of federal farm subsidies. Most ludicrous was the insinuation by Democrats, such as Texas congressman Martin Frost, that Republicans were trying to undermine the Census because they want the federal government to undercount minorities. Who knew Trent Lott had such sway in the barrios of L.A.?

■ George W. Bush proposed a new program, costing \$5 billion over five years, to promote literacy. It could have been worse: The program will promote phonics instruction, the only method of teaching reading that has much scientific foundation, and could thus do good. But "it could have been worse" would probably be the theme of Bush-administration education policy. The public seems impervious to the thought that the importance of education does not mean it should be a function of the federal government. The Department of Education has become sacrosanct; never mind that it was brought into being by the Carter administration and that its positive contribution to American schools since then escapes detection. The battle to end the Education Department—and, more important, to eliminate most of the programs for which it provides an umbrella—is over for the foreseeable future. This is a political reality, and we cannot fault Bush for recognizing it. But neither do we have to like it.

■ Here is a suggestion for the next president: Please do not go to the Radio and Television Correspondents' Dinner.

President Clinton's appearance at the function this year held no surprises. He made gloating little jokes about his impeachment. He made a breathtakingly tasteless crack about little Elián González. He preened, he smirked, he boasted. We might be willing to take this stuff from a president who had displayed any stature in office. Indeed, previous presidents have attended the dinner and delivered humorous remarks about their own PR blunders and policy failures. Previous presidents, however, have not done the disgraceful things Clinton has done; and if they had, a normal human sense of shame would have deterred them from joking about it. A period of recovery, of fumigation, is called for. Let us have a George Washington, stiff with *gravitas*; or at least an Eisenhower, dour and silent. Please, no more jokers for a while. Just till the bad taste has left our mouths.

■ Pennsylvania remains relatively untouched by the ideological transformation of American politics over the last generation: Its Democrats remain more conservative, its Republicans more liberal, than their national parties. The latest demonstration of this pattern is the Democrats' nomination of congressman Ron Klink to challenge Republican senator Rick Santorum this fall. Klink is a pro-lifer and has until recently supported the rights of gun owners. Santorum will therefore have to fight on grounds of economics rather than the easier terrain of values. Yet pro-lifers ought not sit this one out: Santorum has not just voted right, but led the crusade against partial-birth abortion. The press, meanwhile, should (but won't) reconsider the idea that conservatives have placed themselves outside the mainstream with their positions on guns and abortion. That case is a lot harder to make when both of the candidates in Pennsylvania—not the least significant state in the union—hold the "extreme" positions.

■ When the U.S. Civil Rights Commission wants to release an official statement, it typically schedules public hearings 30 days before in the Federal Register. In mid April, however, there was no time for such inconvenient rules, as the commission's Democrats rushed out a report blasting the higher-education plan of Florida governor Jeb Bush. This is the plan that would replace race-conscious undergraduate admissions with a scheme automatically enrolling the top 20 percent of every high school's graduating class in one of the state's public universities. This, charges the civil-rights commission, is a mere "public-relations strategy" and "no substitute for strong race-conscious affirmative action in higher

The Washington Times

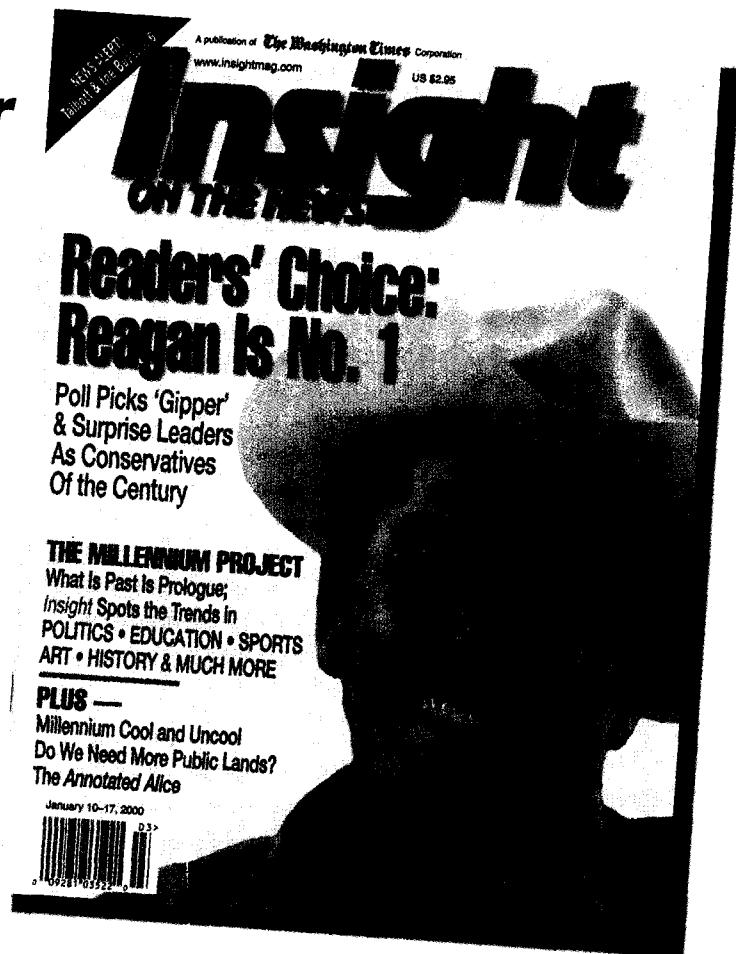
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education." There are good reasons to oppose plans like Florida's. But the commission has engaged in nothing but Bush-bashing. And it is now poised to take a swipe at Rudy Giuliani's police department. Time for an investigation.

■ Many of the same groups that rioted in Seattle last fall during a meeting of the World Trade Organization traveled to Washington to disrupt the annual meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, the international agencies that lend money to Third World governments. Any illegal acts should be firmly dealt with, as they should have been in Seattle. But it should also be conceded that the protesters have half a point when it comes to the World Bank and IMF—which is half a point more than they had about the WTO. The agencies do, as critics charge, often facilitate official corruption, subsidize the despoliation of the environment, and ignore the needs of poor people. The IMF, in particular, frequently demands that poor countries implement a destructive program of high taxes, high tariffs, and currency devaluation as a condition for loans. The protesters will do a lot of posturing about the evils of "global capitalism." But the real sin of the World Bank and IMF is their interference with market forces.

■ A few years ago, the Florida legislature passed a law making it easier for the state to sue cigarette manufacturers. Now it is considering legislation that would make it harder for plaintiffs in tobacco cases to recover big awards. The apparent contradiction is resolved once you realize that the state's concern is money, not justice. Having extracted a \$13 billion settlement from the tobacco companies, payable over 25 years, Florida's politicians want to keep the money rolling in. They are nervously watching a class action by Florida smokers that is expected to result in huge punitive damages, which could threaten the tobacco industry's financial viability—and, more important, its capacity to keep subsidizing legislators' favorite projects. The dilemma of politicians who rail against tobacco even while profiting from it is not new. Urged to ban tobacco, Napoleon is said to have remarked, "This vice brings in 100 million francs in taxes every year. I will certainly forbid it at once—as soon as you can name a virtue that brings in as much revenue."

■ The Supreme Court over the years has shown a peculiar fascination with nude dancing—and its solemn First Amendment implications, of course. In the latest case, the Court allowed the city of Erie, Penn., to continue to require pasties and G-strings. The opinion was notable for Justice David Souter's dissent, which, compared with his opinion in a similar 1991 case, tracked his movement to the left. Also notable was John Paul Stevens's declaration that Erie "has totally silenced a message the dancers at Kandyland want to convey." And just what was the "message" to be conveyed by their unclad gyrations? Nothing, surely, that the ratifiers of the Constitution meant to protect under the rubric of freedom of speech.

■ What Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Féin/IRA, really loves is threatening violence. Long practice has made him excellent at it. Listening respectfully, the British government has made every conceivable concession to him—and some inconceivable ones as well. When Adams and his fellows agreed to enter into a power-sharing political body to run Northern Ireland, one thing was asked of them in return: that the IRA surrender its weapons. No way. Power-sharing has therefore gone into suspended animation. Now here comes Adams promising the delegates at Sinn Féin's annual party conference in Dublin that he will obtain what he wants, guns and all—otherwise, "there could be a slide back to conflict." Power-sharing for him is evidently a blur of a phrase easily abbreviated to just power.

■ Yao Ming, a 19-year-old, 7-foot, 6-inch basketball star, dreams of playing in the NBA. But he is, sadly for him, in China. And Beijing has barred him from participating in the "International Hoop Summit" at Indianapolis. Of course. Regimes of this character consider that they have presided over every aspect of their subjects' lives from conception forward: obstetrics, nutrition, education at all levels, medical care, athletic coaching, etc. The subject's debt to the state is enormous. To "defect" amounts to welching on that debt. Yao Ming—like Elián González's mother—is just one more victim of a rotten and life-wrecking system. There are countless more like him, whose names we will never know. But we are still allowed to reflect on his case, and call it a shame.

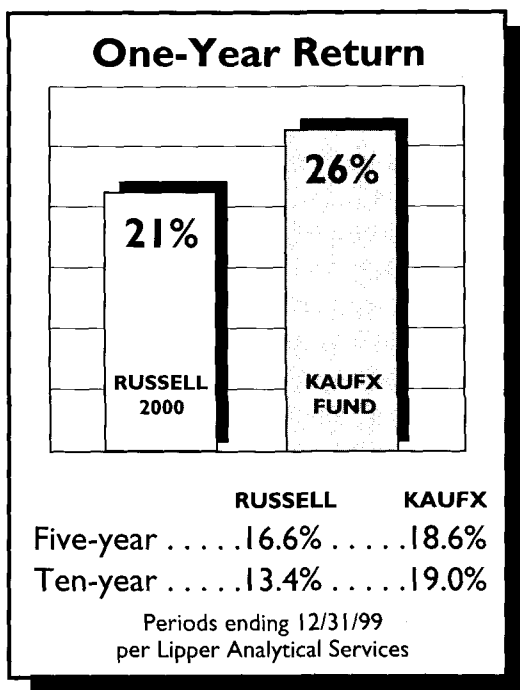
■ One of southern Africa's two experiments in multiracial harmony—the one that once seemed much the more hopeful—is heading into crisis. With elections scheduled for May, the ruling party of Zimbabwe's president Robert Mugabe is facing great popular dissatisfaction. Inflation is at 60 percent, unemployment at 50 percent, and the growth rate at *minus* 2 percent. Eleven thousand Zimbabwean troops are involved in the distant Congo war, for reasons nobody seems able to explain. Thus beleaguered, Mugabe has decided to attack . . . his white citizens. Declaring "this country belongs to black people," Mugabe sent his supporters to invade white-owned farms—the only consistently productive sector of the country's economy—then defied a High Court order to take action against the squatters. Two whites have been killed; dozens injured; scores chased from their farms. Meanwhile, next door, whites are leaving South Africa at the rate of 1,000 families a month. It is too soon to declare that these noble experiments have fallen victim to "democracy with African characteristics," but the odds are shortening fast.

■ Revolutions in social thought can start slowly, lie nearly dormant for years, and then, very suddenly, reach critical mass. It is therefore with great interest that we note the decision of London's *Daily Telegraph* to editorialize on March 30 in favor of drug legalization: "The 'war against drugs' of

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which politicians and police officers like to speak resembles those permanent wars between superpowers that are a feature of George Orwell's 1984: it is never won, though its 'victories' are constantly trumpeted. There is a very big demand for drugs that cannot be curtailed by law, and there are possibilities for supply so great that the law can do no more than push the price up. . . . We increasingly incline to the view that the banning of all drugs causes more harm than good. . . . We tentatively suggest [that the government] experiment with legalisation."

■ This June, Larry P. Arnn will become president of Hillsdale College, succeeding George Roche III, who, during a 28-year tenure, raised academic standards and maintained the school's independence by refusing to accept government funds. Roche won the praise of conservatives for his bold free-market stances and his fundraising skills. But he resigned last November in a tawdry scandal. Arnn, currently president of the Claremont Institute in California, will face the task of reestablishing Hillsdale's good name, a chore made easier by the continuing high quality of the school's faculty and students. Arnn deserves to succeed because Hillsdale College deserves to succeed. May they flourish together.

■ Is this to be a rite of spring? Apparently so. Mumia Abu-Jamal has been invited to give a commencement address. Last year, it was Evergreen State College, a public institution in Washington State. This year, at least, it is a private institution—Antioch College, a citadel of the Left. And who is Mumia? If you have to ask this question, chances are you have not been in contact with the Left since 1982. That is the year he was convicted of murdering a Philadelphia police officer, Daniel Faulkner. Mumia has been a darling and cause of the Left ever since. He delivers his commencement addresses from death row, via closed-circuit television (or something). Officer Faulkner's widow, Maureen, was at Evergreen last year, protesting, though she was not permitted to speak to the students. She intends to be at Antioch, too—where the students are unlikely to be sympathetic. The school's graduating seniors chose Mumia as speaker for the express purpose of aiding his cause (which is to be sprung—though he has never claimed to be innocent). Students who would do such a thing are probably lost to decency and respect. But the rest of us, along with Maureen Faulkner, should not remain silent in the face of them.

■ Conservatives, as usual, are under the gun on college campuses. At Georgetown, undergraduate Robert Swope, a columnist for the school's main newspaper, *The Hoya*, was fired. His offense was to have submitted a column questioning the presentation of *The Vagina Monologues* on this putatively Catholic campus. The play is, in a word, immoral and repulsive (okay, two). A week after this incident, a student at Michigan State, Jason Van Dyke, was fired from that school's paper, *The State News*, for questioning a "Gay Pride"

celebration of three weeks' duration. The world may tire of conservative complaints about bias and discrimination. But conservatives tire of the bias and discrimination.

■ This year's Pulitzer Prize for commentary went—gasp!—to Paul Gigot of the *Wall Street Journal*. So great is Gigot's claim to this award that it is a real surprise to see him get it. The prize committee has tended to reward the overrated, the conventional, and the liberal—for instance, last year's winner Maureen Dowd. Gigot, an NR alumnus, is none of those things. His column regularly contains fresh reporting and fresh analysis from a perspective both soundly conservative and politically sophisticated. It is one of the few columns that can genuinely be described as must-reading in Washington. Our warmest congratulations to Gigot and the *Journal*.

■ DEPT. OF SELF-CONGRATULATION: An outfit called the Committee of Concerned Journalists bears, believe it or not, good news. Its new study of political reporting on the Web finds that National Review Online is among the Internet's top sites for volume of original reporting and writing. NRO outpaced the websites of such laggards as the *New York Times*, the Microsoft Network, and CNN. All the more reason to check out nationalreview.com, where we stand athwart history 24 hours a day.

■ Readers, please note that our feature "Letter from AI" is on hiatus for a couple of issues, as the author of that feature, Rob Long, is himself on hiatus. He is doing a Phileas T. Fogg-like world tour, from which he will return, no doubt, funnier than ever. (The Democratic nominee, as well, is likely to be funnier than ever.) Also, please note that there will be an extra week between this issue and next. The other such instance this year will be at Christmas.

CAMPAIGN 2000

It's Still the Economy

IN recent weeks, George W. Bush has been concentrating on issues that have caused trouble for Republicans in the past, such as education, the environment, and health care. The (varying) merits of his proposals on these topics aside, it is hard to disagree with the campaign's judgment that Bush has to reduce his political vulnerabilities. Still, keeping Bush's negatives down is no substitute for making a positive case for his election—and that case must prominently include an economic argument.

This point may seem obvious, but there are Bush allies who controvert it. They say that people are content with the economy and more concerned about the moral tone of society. Or they say that people credit the private sector and Alan Greenspan for the boom, not Bill Clinton and Al Gore, and will therefore not be susceptible to Gore's argument



Immigrants who don't learn English can really clean up in America.

Who cares if immigrants don't learn the language of equal opportunity? Not the politicians who have forgotten what makes this great melting pot work. Not the self-described advocates for immigrants who put their own political agendas ahead of real advancement for non-English speaking citizens. But we're U.S. ENGLISH and we do. With over 1.4 million members, we're the largest non-partisan organization working to promote English as the common language. Because how can we expect our newest residents to work hard for the American dream if we don't communicate that the price of advancement is understanding and speaking English. To join our efforts, visit our web site at www.us-english.org. Or call 1-800-U.S.-ENGLISH.



that only he can safeguard prosperity. Or, most commonly, they say that the economy is doing so well under a Democratic administration that it would be hard to make a case for change; better to change the subject instead.

Every one of these points contains some truth. But it is also true that the economy is always a major issue in a national election; that Bush needs to have a response when Gore brags about the administration's economic record; and that Bush's noneconomic themes (compassionate conservatism, etc.) do not yet add up to a compelling reason for swing voters to put him in the White House. If winning the economic argument against Gore will be hard—as it surely will—that just means that the time to start is now.

Bush has to show that he understands the building blocks of the new economy: brainpower, free trade, hard money, low tax rates, and constant innovation. To keep the prosperity going, the government will have to innovate too. School choice is therefore necessary not just on the grounds of justice for inner-city kids who deserve to have a future, but on the grounds of the country's future productivity. Health care, meanwhile, is as sclerotic an industry as telecommunications and the airlines used to be; like them, it needs to be exposed to the dynamic effects of consumer choice.

Social Security, too, must be modernized. So far, Gov. Bush has been admirably willing to argue against the status quo Gore defends. The next step is to lay out some principles for reform. He should stress that current recipients will not see their benefits reduced; that anyone may remain in the present system if he wishes; but that workers will also have the option to put some of their payroll taxes in private markets instead. A detailed plan is not necessary at this stage, and it is probably unwise to give Gore a convenient target for demagoguery. What is important is that the Republicans, for once, take the offensive on Social Security.

Gore, meanwhile, threatens the economy. The Kyoto global-warming accord, with the array of energy taxes it entails, is the most damaging item on his agenda. But there is also his wobbliness on trade, which is in stark contrast to Clinton's free-trade line in 1992.

WTO PREVIEWS

*Clinton races from the entrance
Toward a limousine
Like a ritzy hotel doorman;
TV shoots the scene.
Labor goons in bellhop outfits
Razz the Chinese, who,
Stepping from the rented limo,
Kick a passage through.*

—W. H. VON DREELE



The Democrats' fondness for litigation, already a dead weight on the economy, now threatens to drag it down. The possibility that the administration might mangle Microsoft has been roiling the markets. Cisco's market value dropped \$30 billion in one day—the second-biggest drop in history, right behind Microsoft's own simultaneous \$80 billion loss. Even competitors of Microsoft, who were cheering the administration's suit, got burned. Assistant attorney general Joel Klein said that the Microsoft prosecution will “set the ground rules for [antitrust] enforcement in the Information Age.” The Information Age is voting against him. The public, too, according to most polls. Bush therefore has an opportunity to argue against the Justice Department's hyperactivity. (It has initiated lawsuits against hundreds of companies, not just Microsoft.)

Bush has made supportive noises about Microsoft, but he has been leery of weighing in more heavily. Partly this is because he has high-profile supporters who oppose the company. Partly it's because the Bush campaign is excessively concerned about controlling its own fate and not being buffeted by events. While everyone was talking about Elián González, the campaign stuck to education. No one paid much heed. Bush isn't even talking about tax cuts any more. Driving a message is fine, but it can't be done without regard for what actually commands public attention. Gov. Bush is not going to be elected for his blue eyes alone, or for his education plan.

ELIAN

Are We Still America?

THE Elián González affair has now taken on all the familiar contours of a Clinton operation. There is the shady lawyer with his questionable funding. There are the private meetings between Clinton emissaries and foreign despots, with unknown deals being struck and unknown favors being traded. There is the gearing-up of the slander machine: James Carville has not yet appeared to tell us that Cuban-Americans are unstable, like Kathleen Willey, or trailer-park trash, like Paula Jones, but the smash-mouth operation against this patriotic and hard-working minority is well under way. By the time Clinton's media shills have finished their work, Cuban-Americans will have approximately as much credibility as Idaho militias.

There is the careful, ominous silence from Clinton himself. (Do you really think our president would have anything to do with this dirty stuff? No, no; it's just some overzealous underlings.) There are, alas, impeachment-whipped congressional Republicans, dithering and ducking, anxiously checking their polls; and congressional Democrats, already practicing their triumphant sneers. There is the Democratic presidential candidate, triangulating wildly; and there is the Republican candidate, saying approximately the right things but very, very q-u-i-e-t-l-y.

Lost in all this is any conception that America has a role of moral leadership to play, and that this has been an excellent opportunity to play it. How one longs for someone—*anyone*—in our public life to stand up and say those things that the Clintons and Renos will never say, because they are not even capable of thinking them. That this nation loves liberty. That we detest Communism. That we will, on every possible occasion, strive to vex and humiliate Communist dictators and all others who boast themselves our enemies, to frustrate their designs, to diminish them in the eyes of their own people, to hasten their downfall by any means our laws and ethics permit.

The Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky once suggested that any Western policy towards Communists should be evaluated by the following test: What does it look like to the men and women in the camps? In Castro's camps, they are weeping.

OBITUARY

Anthony Powell, R.I.P.

ANTHONY POWELL was the last of a generation of British writers that included Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene, W. H. Auden, and George Orwell. Those were the days. After a conventional upbringing and education, Powell

began to write fiction and to work in a small but select publishing firm. Almost the only unconventional thing he ever did was to accept an invitation in 1937 to Hollywood as a scriptwriter. This didn't work out, but at least he met Scott Fitzgerald and fell under the influence of Nathanael West. During the war, he was a liaison officer to the numerous foreign military missions in London. Afterward, at the impressive rate of one every two years, he published the twelve volumes of a series which he called *A Dance to the Music of Time*. Here, as in a giant warehouse, he accumulated the stories of all the people he had ever met. Caricatured without much invention, these people came from rather limited circles of society, the aristocracy and bohemia, crowding together at that rather privileged crossroads where smart and art converge. The raw material was spread wide rather than deep. Never really a bestseller, this work nevertheless attracted a hard core of fans—faddists, cultists even—among them Kingsley Amis, Philip Larkin, and V. S. Naipaul.

As the title of that series implies, life was a human comedy to Powell. While not a writer out for comic effects in the manner of Thurber, say, or S. J. Perelman, he believed that people and things were intrinsically funny, but otherwise purposeless to the point of absurdity. Here was someone essentially conservative, who relished everything established, and mocked the strivers and the seekers on the grounds that things never do change for the better, only for

Amazing Diabetes Improvement

(SPECIAL) – Here's important news for anyone with diabetes. A remarkable book is now available that reveals a medically tested method that normalizes blood sugar naturally...and greatly improves the complications associated with diabetes. People report **better vision, more energy, faster healing, regained feeling in their feet**, as well as a reduction of various risk factors associated with other diseases.

It's called the "*Diabetes Improvement Program*" and it was researched, developed and written by a leading medical researcher. It shows you exactly how nature can activate your body's built-in healers once you start eating the right combination of foods. It works for both Type I and Type II diabetes and it can reduce, and in some cases even eliminate, the need to take insulin. It gives diabetics control of their lives and a feeling of satisfaction that comes from having normal blood sugar profiles.

The results speak for themselves. The "*Diabetes Improvement Program*" is based on research that is so new most doctors aren't aware of it yet. It tells you which delicious foods to eat and which to avoid. It also warns you of the potential danger of cer-

tain so-called "diabetes" diets. It's been proven amazingly effective time and time again...and works so fast you can begin to feel improvement in a matter of days. The "*Diabetes Improvement Program*" is based on documented scientific principles that can:

- **Eliminate ketones and give you more abundant energy**
- **Make blood sugar levels go from High Risk to Normal**
- **Stimulate scratches and scrapes to heal faster**
- **Improve eyesight**
- **Improve your balance**
- **Help numb feet regain a level of feeling**
- **Reverse neuropathy and resultant heel ulcers**

Improvement can be seen in other areas as well, such as **lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol and reduced triglyceride levels**. There has also been a reduction of other risk factors associated with: **heart attacks, stroke, retinopathy, kidney damage**.

What's more, it can help improve **short term memory** and make you feel **more alert and no longer chronically tired**. Improvements and even total cures of

double vision or diplopia may also be experienced.

If you or someone you know have diabetes, this could be the most important book you'll ever read. As part of a special introductory offer, right now you can order a special press run of the "*Diabetes Improvement Program*" for only \$12.95 plus \$2.00 shipping. It comes with a 90 day money back guarantee. If you are not 100% satisfied, simply return it for a full refund...no questions asked.

Order an extra copy for family or friend and SAVE. You can order 2 for only \$20 total.

HERE'S HOW TO ORDER:

Simply PRINT your name and address and the words "Diabetes Improvement" on a piece of paper and mail it along with a check or money order to: THE LEADER CO., INC., Publishing Division, Dept. DB381, P.O. Box 8347, Canton, Ohio 44711. VISA or MasterCard send card number and expiration date. Act now. Orders are fulfilled on a first come, first served basis.

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the worse. Gossip and good wine are all that the wise should expect. Laughter is the remedy. A learned man in his way, he dearly loved useless information, for example heraldry and genealogy, timetables, abstruse words, peculiar names. His wife was the daughter of an earl, and he could discourse by the hour upon the grandeur and vagaries of her family, the Pakenhams. When he came to write his memoirs, also in several volumes, he began in much the same spirit, with a Welsh ancestor in 1234 by the name of Rhys the Hoarse.

Malcolm Muggeridge was a bosom friend, and for a while also a colleague on *Punch*, then a humorous weekly. Unlike Powell, though, Muggeridge had a genuine interest in pol-

itics, and this led him to religion. One day, he wrote a disrespectful review of Powell's latest book. One of those literary rows ensued which so amuse onlookers. Muggeridge was never forgiven for what in the end boiled down to having beliefs, unlike Powell. For fifty years Powell had reviewed in the *Daily Telegraph*, but after a dismissive review there of one of his books, he never wrote again for that paper.

English literature has many great men, but a special glory is its minor masters, and Powell, in all his crustiness and idiosyncrasy, was one of them.

—DAVID PRYCE-JONES

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

■ The Board of Directors herewith notes the creation of the office of Executive Publisher, and takes great pleasure in announcing the appointment of Scott Budd to that office. Mr. Budd has been on the staff of NATIONAL REVIEW since 1991. Before coming to NR, he served with Ziff-Davis Publishing and CMP Publishing. He holds a B.S. from Skidmore College and lives, with his wife and three children, in Cos Cob, Conn. The editors and publisher join in congratulating Scott and hailing his accomplishments as advertising director.

■ Memo to: WFB
From: Ed [Capano]

Our energetic readers will be encouraged to learn that Terry Maloney, our circulation director, ran the Maui marathon in 4 hours, 46 minutes, yielding only to a competitor who had neglected to renew her subscription and wanted a little encouragement at the 18-mile marker. I know all red-blooded subscribers will cheer Terry's stamina and her sense of priorities.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: As seniors at Washington and Lee University, we are prevented by budget constraints from sending the fund-appeal amounts we would like to NR. We currently share one subscription among us, and each issue is read and reread for its insights and information.

We cannot thank you enough for the service NR provides, nor can we enumerate the countless times the arguments and statistics it contains have enabled us to win others to the conservative cause.

We have pooled our resources and sacrificed our amenities, and together present this gift of \$100.

Next fall we will enter law school, and at that time you will no doubt receive the benefits of a subscription from each of us. While we lack the intellectual gifts to write for NR, after law school we will amass great fortunes and become recognized public figures. At that time we promise to support NR in more substantial ways.

Thanks again for a great magazine.

Sincerely,
Lance Clack
David Damiani
Boyd Camak III
Lexington, Va.

Dear Messrs. Clack, Damiani, and Camak: That is a handsome gift, and on behalf of the editors and staff, I accept it with deep gratitude. I hope in years to come to find myself in a position to patronize you. All my business will go to the law firm of Clack, Damiani, and Camak.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Bill: Thank you for your recent six-page letter outlining your many years of panhandling for NR. It pains me to see a patrician such as yourself

reduced to such a pernicious habit. It is the equivalent of having Barbara Bush dip snuff and watch it dribble down her chin. I do offer an idea to increase circulation. Do a monthly fold-out of Florence King in various provocative poses. I stress it will be the magazine's circulation that will improve, not mine. If you do this, I will double my Christmas-gift spending, thereby increasing to three the number of my subscriptions.

Your otherwise friend and admirer,
Richard C. McFarlain
Tallahassee, Fla.

Dear Richard: I'll suggest that to the great Florence, and advise.

Cordially, Bill

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Re: Thomas A. Canning's letter [March 6] on locutions that foster the gun culture: While watching a segment on *60 Minutes*, I suddenly blurted out, "Stand by your guns!"

Although my wife was the only one who heard my "expletive," the words have been spoken. I am retired Navy, 71 years of age. Can I, will I, may I ever be forgiven?

Cordially,
Earl E. Keele
Greenville, Mo.

Dear Mr. Keele: I don't know about Mrs. Keele, but we at NR forgive your wild language.
Cordially,

—WFB

Still Useful, and Idiotic

The Left remains itself

JOHN DERBYSHIRE

THE sad, depressing affair of Elián González has brought to light the following unpleasant truth, among many others: that so long as Communism is with us, so also will be the Useful Idiots—those members of Western intellectual elites who can find nothing bad to say about the totalitarian order.

Useful Idiocy has a long and ignoble pedigree. Studying at Cambridge immediately after the Russian Revolution, Vladimir Nabokov was dismayed to find a majority of his classmates pro-Bolshevik. Ten years later Sidney and Beatrice Webb were asking: "Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?" They dropped the question mark in the book's second edition. Seven more years finds Ambassador Joseph E. Davies purring over the "exceedingly wise and gentle" Stalin. Fast-forward another 20 years to Han Suyin extolling Mao Tse-tung's new society of justice and fair rations for all. On to the Seventies, with Graham Greene asserting that, if forced to choose between living in the U.S.A. or the U.S.S.R., he would "of course" choose the latter. (The old fraud actually lived on the French Riviera.) On, on into the 1980s, when Socialist Man was being created in Nicaragua, and New York poets and Wisconsin schoolteachers were flocking there to breathe the pure air of liberation.

We might reasonably have expected that with the demise of the U.S.S.R. the Useful Idiots would have shut down their operations, even if they could not bring themselves to actually apologize for having shilled for the

most monstrous tyrannies in human history. Not a bit of it. As Mick Jagger said in a different context: They don't embarrass easy. True, the U.S.S.R. is one with Nineveh and Tyre; and China's "socialism with Chinese characteristics" bears a resemblance to mercantilist fascism too close for even the Left to ignore. Never mind: There is still Cuba, and there is still Fidel.

So here they come, emerging from the caves and thickets, the newsrooms and poli-sci departments where they have been sulking silently these past eleven years. Here is Eleanor Clift on *The McLaughlin Group*: "Being a poor child in Cuba is probably better than being a poor child in Miami." Here is Bob

Herbert in the *New York Times* telling us that "the boy has a father who wants him in Cuba." How does Mr. Herbert know that, since the father has never been in a position to speak freely about what he wants? Here is Richard Cohen in the *Washington Post* asserting that "Juan Miguel [has behaved like] a typical father." Speaking as a father of, I hope, a fairly typical strain, I would not

have waited four months to go to my boy after learning he had been rescued at sea; nor, once embarked, would I have proceeded to a different city from the one my son was in, to beg a bunch of government bureaucrats to carry out my responsibilities for me while I stayed in a diplomatic safe house surrounded by secret-police goons. Sr. González has a gun at his head, and I do not blame him for his actions; but to say that they are those of a "typical father" is preposterous.

The most emetic pieces of Useful Idiocy to appear so far in this context have been Douglas Montero's columns from Cuba in the *New York Post*. In one of them, under the headline "It's as simple as a father picking up his son," Montero launched into a rhapsodic antithesis between the "simple man" (Juan González) and the "powerful man" (Fidel Castro) as they parted at Havana's airport. The piece bears quoting at length as evidence that the sentimental idealization of Leninist thugs is not yet a dead art.

"The powerful man shook the simple man's right hand and gently clapped him on the shoulder as if he were a son going away to college.

"Castro stepped to the side and humbly lowered his head as he extended his right arm toward the simple man's family."

There is a good deal of embracing. Then the powerful man walks slowly toward reporters, "seeming for a moment to choke on the words he was about to utter. . . . The tears welling in his eyes glistened under the lights of the television cameras."



By Roman Genn

Mr. Derbyshire is a contributing editor of NATIONAL REVIEW.

El Jefe Máximo managed to master himself sufficiently to speak to those reporters for nearly an hour.

Next we get a glimpse of the relatives—Sr. González's mother, father-in-law and two mothers-in-law—who are staying behind in Cuba so Castro will have someone to shoot if the poor sap defects. "I'm not afraid because I know that the Lord is on our side," Quintana [the mother] said sadly but firmly." And somewhat ambiguously, one cannot help thinking. Meanwhile:

"Several yards away another powerful man spoke.

"Ricardo Alarcon, president of Cuba's National Assembly [you don't get much more powerful than *that*!], chief Elián negotiator and González's advisor—explaining why González might have to stay in the U.S. for a while—said the U.S. government has to first 'liberate' Elián from the clutches of his Miami relatives."

■

**Won't the Michael Moores
and Douglas Monteros ever
learn? No, their stupidity is
impenetrable.**

■

Clutches? What were those relatives supposed to do with the boy? Throw him back into the ocean? But never fear: The U.S. government—previously known as the Bloodstained Yanqui Oppressor in official Cuban pronouncements—can be depended on to do the right thing.

"In Washington, the most powerful man in this country merely said he's satisfied with Attorney General Janet Reno's handling of the matter: 'She really understands what's going on,' President Clinton said."

You bet she does. But let us hope that she was at least sufficiently chastened by the consequences of her Waco child-rescue strategy that subsequent developments in the González affair will not feature any tanks or flamethrowers.

A close runner-up in the Norman Mailer challenge cup for tongue-polishing Castro's boots (back in the Seventies, if memory serves, a swooning Mr. Mailer compared the *comandante* to an erect penis) is Michael Moore, the

faux-populist lefty who made a movie called *Roger and Me* to expose the wickedness of General Motors in particular and capitalism in general. In an open "letter of apology" to Elián, Moore explained that Elián's mother was *not* trying to bring the boy to freedom when she died. The ghastly truth is, "your mother and her boyfriend snatched you and put you on that death boat because they simply wanted to make more money." Setting aside Mr. Moore's heartless impertinence in pretending to know the motives of two people now dead; and setting aside also the word "snatched," which is a parroting of the Castro propaganda line unsupported by any facts; the gist of *Roger and Me*, as I recall, was that Roger Smith, the CEO of General Motors, by closing plants and laying off workers, was preventing those workers from . . . making more money. Poverty is a bad thing in Flint, Michigan, apparently; but it is just fine in Havana.

After some blather about Cuba having 100 percent literacy and rock-bottom infant mortality, as if Cuban government statistics were worth the low-grade paper they are printed on, we get this: "Your mother placed you in a situation where you were certain to die on the open seas . . . and that is unconscionable." *Unconscionable?* How about "desperate"? And if the boy's death was "certain," he would now be dead, wouldn't he? Moore continues: "It was the ultimate form of child abuse." Ah, child abuse! Send for Janet Reno!

There are, of course, plenty of other Michael Moores and Douglas Monteros. Every time I turn on my TV, every time I pick up a newspaper, I see a new one. It's like a Night of the Living Dead—lefties coming up out of the ground and lurching off across the landscape looking for a Maximum Leader, a Great Helmsman, a Little Father of the People to slobber over. With the centenary of Lenin's revolution looming on the far horizon, and after all the horrors of our age—mountains of corpses, oceans of lies—these fools are still with us. Wherever there is a jackboot stomping on a human face there will be a well-heeled Western liberal to explain that the face does, after all, enjoy free health care and 100 percent literacy. Won't they ever learn? No, their stupidity is impenetrable. They will never learn. NR

■ ELIAN II ■

Typing for Castro

The awful
Gabriel García Márquez

MARK FALCOFF

IN *Dulces guerreros cubanos*, published last year in Spain, Cuban exile writer and former Castro confidant Norberto Fuentes tells the curious story of Gabriel García Márquez. The well-known Colombian novelist made several journeys to Cuba in the 1970s with but one goal in mind—to gain an audience with the Maximum Leader.

Apparently Castro was in no hurry to see him. After all, García Márquez was not known as a man of the Left; indeed, in his own country he had not (and still has not) supported any of the Marxist guerrilla movements seeking to overthrow the government. Nor, during the radical Sixties, was he a producer of "committed" Latin American literature. Far from it. His *A Hundred Years of Solitude* is a fable with no apparent political moral. The same is true of his *Autumn of the Patriarch*, despite its ostensible subject matter, the declining days of a Latin American dictator.

To return to Fuentes's account. Castro let García Márquez languish, along with his wife and family, in a government guesthouse, testing his resolve. After making him wait for months, the great man finally received the writer. Since then they have become fast friends, and García Márquez has a permanent home on the island. He has become a kind of cultural ambassador for the Cuban regime, hosting the visits of foreign literary innocents (most recently, William Styron and Arthur Miller) and even occasionally helping to release celebrity literary prisoners (one

Mr. Falcoff is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. He regularly translates the works of Latin-American writers.

of whom was Fuentes himself). He is also a sort of literary hatchet man for Castro.

Periodically, though, the Cuban dictator tests Gabo, as his friends call him. One of these tests was to go off to Spain and tell Prime Minister Felipe González to his face that "Fidel thinks you are a queer." He had been sent to convey the same message to Omar Torrijos, the late dictator of Panama. The purpose of these missions was not, surely, merely to express Castro's momentary displeasure with either Torrijos or González, but to humiliate a sensitive man of letters as a way of demonstrating the Cuban caudillo's limitless power. One can only hope the recipients of this unusual message were suitably impressed.

One can hardly be surprised, then, at the cultural bomb that Castro ordered García Márquez to set off in his favorite American outlet—the op-ed page of the *New York Times*—on March 29. The apparent purpose of the piece, "Shipwrecked on Dry Land," was to offer the Castro regime's official version of how little Elián González found his way to Miami on a raft.

It was a clever retelling of the story, with maximum emphasis on the apparent frivolity of Elián's martyred mother and the alleged sobriety and fitness of his father, whom she left "for a neighborhood tough." Although García Márquez admits that there are no secrets in small-town Cuba—in effect, everybody in Elián's hometown of Cárdenas seems to have known about the projected voyage—he would nonetheless have us believe that the boy's father remained in unique ignorance of the fact.

There then follows a version of the relationship between the little boy and his Miami relatives utterly at variance with everything anyone knows about the subject. When Elián's father, Juan González, is talking to his son on the telephone, González purportedly told García Márquez, "sometimes they shout at the boy . . . or turn the volume all the way up on television cartoons, or put a candy in his mouth so it's hard to understand what he's saying."

With excellent literary effect, García Márquez saved the *pièce de résistance* for the last. At Elián's sixth birthday party,

"his hosts took a picture of him wearing a combat helmet, surrounded by weapons and wrapped in the flag of the United States, just a short while before a boy of his age in Michigan shot a classmate to death with a handgun."

■
**He is really saying that most
Americans, and indeed
probably most Cubans, here or
there, have it all wrong.**
■

"In other words, the real shipwreck of Elián did not take place on the high seas, but when he set foot on American soil."

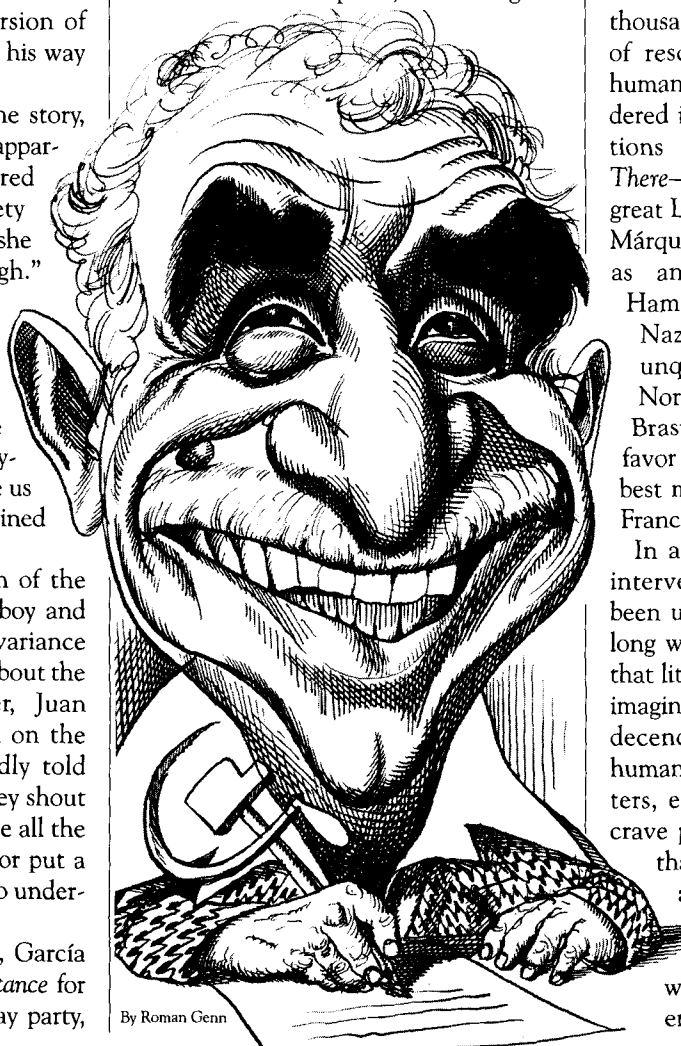
Excuse me, Señor García Márquez, but what you are really saying is that most Americans, and indeed probably most Cubans, here or there, have it all wrong. In the confrontation between the two countries, it is the *United States* that is the villain of the piece, Cuba the good

country. It is the Miami relatives—not the Cuban government—who engage in brainwashing. It is Cuba that is the peace-loving country—Cuba, where children are taught from earliest childhood to think in terms of combat and weapons, forced to wear uniforms and engage in mock military exercises. If the boy must be saved from anything, it is growing up in the United States, the worst place on earth.

These ideas may seem wildly topsyturvy to most people, but not to García Márquez. Not a word about why Elián's mother and a dozen other adults might have found their lives and prospects in Cuba so dismal that they jumped onto a flimsy raft and risked (and, in many cases, lost) their lives in the Florida straits. Not just Elián or his mother or the others on board, but thousands, indeed tens of thousands, of Cubans who have taken the same risk. Nothing about a regime that deliberately starves its people to maintain it in perpetual submission and, at least indirectly, forces thousands to take to flimsy boats in hope of rescue. Nothing at all about the human drama of an entire people sundered in half by the vainglorious ambitions of a bloodthirsty dictator. *There*—there, indeed—is material for a great Latin American novel. But García Márquez is not the man to write it. Just as another Nobel laureate, Knut Hamsun, who collaborated with the Nazi occupiers of his country, was unqualified to write the great Norwegian war novel. Or as Robert Brasillach, who wielded his pen in favor of the Vichy regime, was not the best man to relate the tale of wartime France.

In a curious way, García Márquez's intervention in this controversy has been useful and constructive. It goes a long way towards dispelling the notion that literary distinction, whether real or imagined, is necessarily related to truth, decency, or the ordinary values of humanity. It reminds us that men of letters, even very successful ones, often crave power and prominence far more than creative achievement. And it also highlights the curiously symbiotic relationship between the New York literary-intellectual world and some of our most vicious enemies abroad.

NR



By Roman Genn

■ ELIAN III ■

No Place for a Child

Cuba as soul-killer

KATE O'BEIRNE

THE only thing worse than being a typical child in Cuba is being Elián González back home under the triumphant glare of Fidel Castro. Before his mother made her desperate escape, Elián faced the same deprivation and indoctrination as all Cuban children. Now, Castro rails against the evil imperialists who kidnapped the six-year-old he calls the island's "boy hero."

Although attorney general Janet Reno stubbornly insists that the primacy of family ties warrants Elián's return to his father, Cuba's dictator makes a mockery of parental prerogatives. He has pledged to "reprogram" the child so his attitudes don't disappoint the crowds in Havana who chant that Elián has become "the new patriot of the Revolution."

Reno is upholding the rights of a parent who has none. Cuba's top diplomat in Washington called Elián "a possession of the state," which is plainly true under Cuba's "Code of the Child, Law No. 16." The development of a child's "Communist personality" is paramount, any influence contrary to Communism must be fought, and advanced schooling is predicated on a child's political attitude. The state may remove custody from parents found to be "hindering" their children's Communist formation.

The bright, happy little boy racing around that fenced yard in Little Havana will face the soul-crushing conformity of a totalitarian state. Because the school desk he left behind has reportedly been turned into a "national shrine," any deviation by Elián from what loyal young Communists must think would be ruthlessly suppressed. In the Soviet Union, a "Stakhanovite" was someone who was willing to overfulfill work quotas at the cost of his life. As a celebrated subject of the regime, Elián

González will have to be the most committed little Communist in Cuba, at the expense of his innocence.

And Castro's regime will be keeping close track. The Ministry of the Interior assigns infants an "Identification Card of the Child" that must be carried at all times, until age 16. In its 17 pages, which include residential addresses and schools attended, notations are made about the child's "political attitude." This is where a record would be made should Elián ever express positive feelings about his experience in Miami or kind words about his family there. Elián will have to adopt the view that his late mother's flight makes her a traitor and a despised enemy of the revolution.

Elián also has a Student Cumulative Dossier, where teachers make a record of his and his family's opinions and behavior. Elián would have gotten good marks for belonging to the Young Communist Pioneers, which he had joined before leaving Cuba. The group's motto is: "We shall be like Che." The schools' curriculum is saturated with the glories of the revolution. In the fourth and fifth grades, Elián's written compositions will concentrate on "Yankee imperialism" and "Cuba's enemies." There is also time for a kind of recreation that will counter the corrupting influence of Disney World: The schools have frequent exercises called "Military Games for Pioneers," in which the children play at attacking bridges, finding land mines, sneaking up on sentries, and throwing grenades through windows. At age ten, children head off to agricultural work camps for three months each year, where they work and continue their military games.

Juan Miguel González might be freely choosing this stultifying regime for his son. He enjoys a relatively privileged status in an impoverished Cuba because he works at a tourist hotel that provides tips in precious foreign currency. Mr. González is possibly a successful product of the relentless indoctrination his son would endure. Should he return to Cuba, with his son in hand, he will be the father of a national icon, with an exalted status he may relish.

If, however, it becomes apparent that Mr. González's demands are not the product of his free will, Janet Reno would have to admit that her INS officials were duped when they visited him

in Cuba. This gives Reno an obvious incentive to insist mulishly that Mr. González is not being coerced by the long arm of Fidel Castro (who, after all, maintains control of Mr. González's extended family in Cuba).

The attorney general's old friend, Sr. Jeanne O'Laughlin of Barry University, wasn't as easily persuaded. After hosting Elián's grandmothers at their reunion with the child in January, the Dominican nun decided to oppose Elián's return to Cuba. During the visit, the grandmothers' Cuban escort remained in close telephone contact with Havana, and Sr. O'Laughlin noted the grandmothers' "trembling, furtive looks." Her conclusion: "I do not think that this child will be able to live without fear if he goes back."

Further, one of the grandmothers admitted that she had greeted Elián by biting the tip of his tongue and pulling his pants down for a genital examination. If a grandmother had so treated a child in a Miami day-care center, back in the days when Janet Reno was a state attorney, she would be in jail, the entire family would be under suspicion, and Elián would be in foster care.

Whether or not Juan Miguel González is expressing his true wishes for his son, Elián might have a separate claim for political asylum, not dependent on his father's views. Grover Joseph Rees, a former INS general counsel, argues that "if a six-year-old could win an asylum hearing on the merits owing to his political opinions, that child would be Elián." Rees explains that Elián's claim has arisen since he left Cuba, because of the expectation that he will now be singled out for special treatment should he return. But the child is unable to file a claim, because Reno has decided that only Elián's father, acting on the child's behalf, has the right to make that argument.

The attorney general falsely insists that the rule of law dictates Elián's fate. In fact, it is the Rule of Reno that has declared that Mr. González is not being coerced and that no other guardian can make an asylum claim on Elián's behalf. A short delay—to allow a court to determine what is in the child's best interests—wouldn't do irreparable harm to Elián. But irreparable damage waits for Elián if he is forced to return to Castro's island prison.

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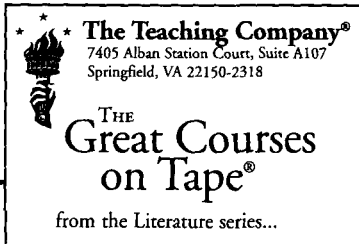
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Mack, Anyone?

A possible veep for Bush

JOHN J. MILLER

ONE of the first things people notice about Connie Mack is the hole in his smile. At 13, the future Republican senator from Florida dove into a swimming pool and chipped his front tooth. The dentist told him he was too young to have it capped because the root might die. A few years later, the question came up again. "I decided never to do anything about it," says Mack. "It had become a part of who I am."

That's another thing about Mack: He may be more comfortable with who he is than any other politician in Washington. He plans to retire from the Senate next January—a decision he announced more than a year ago, to complete surprise in a city of climbers. Mack leaves behind a safe seat and a career still on the rise. In his 1994 reelection campaign (against Hillary Clinton's brother), he won 71 percent of the vote—more than any other GOP Senate candidate that year. In 1996, Bob Dole very nearly chose him as his running mate. Today Mack says 18 years in Congress is enough, and that if he had to live his life over again, maybe he'd go into genetics research or biotechnology. "I don't want to give the impression that I'm tired of politics, because I'm not," he says. "But I'll be 60 in October. If I'm going to do something different with my life, the time is now, not when I'm 66."

Mack may be asked to do something different with his life even before October. In a conversation with *NATIONAL REVIEW* in March, George W. Bush mentioned Mack as a potential vice-presidential pick. No surprise: As a popular pol from a state the Republicans lost four years ago for the first time in 20 years, he makes sense geographically. As an Irish Catholic, he makes sense demographically. And as a pro-life supply-sider, he

makes sense ideologically. There's only one problem: "I'm not looking to do it," says Mack. But would he? "The answer is no." Bush has until the end of July, when the GOP convention begins, to get to yes.

If Bush taps Mack, pundits will immediately accuse Bush of weakness—having to protect a state that ought to be firmly in the GOP column. But there's reason to believe Florida is worth defending aggressively. In supporting legal residency for Elián González, the vice president bucked his party's Castro-philics to please Miami voters. And Gore advisers talk constantly about putting Florida's other senator, Bob Graham, on the ticket. "Gore might be competitive here even without Graham," says Herb Harmon, former executive director of the state GOP. Most polls show Bush ahead in Florida, but a recent one actually had him 6 percentage points down. Although Bush might win Florida with-

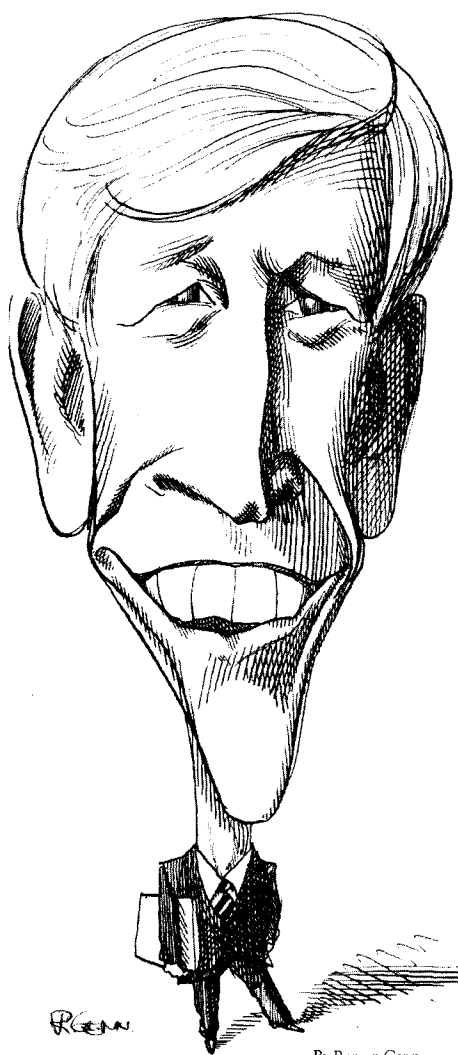
out Mack, selecting him would lock up the state—and liberate time and money for battles to the north.

Mack would be useful there, too. His name has a unique resonance in Philadelphia, where his grandfather, also called Connie Mack, was the longtime owner and manager of baseball's Philadelphia Athletics (since relocated to Oakland, via Kansas City). Old Connie Mack, a Hall of Famer, is perhaps the most storied name in the city's history. Sen. Mack was born in Philadelphia, but his family moved to Florida when he was a boy. (Spring-training weather is hard to resist.) A lot of Pennsylvania voters from a certain generation—and perhaps a few old-timers living in Philadelphia's New Jersey suburbs—would smile if they saw Mack's name on the ballot. And what a great story for the local media during the GOP convention in the City of Brotherly Love: Connie Mack comes home.

One of the things they'll talk about is how Connie Mack got his name. Like his grandfather, Sen. Mack is legally named Cornelius McGillicuddy. That's what it says on his driver's license. Legend has it that Philly sportswriters found the name too unwieldy for headlines and scorecards, so they shortened it, and the nickname caught on. Florida law permits candidates to put any name they want on the ballot, as long as they're not defrauding the public. So Cornelius McGillicuddy III became Connie Mack.

The Bush campaign might actually want him to change his name back, at least for the purpose of bumper stickers. Is there a more quintessentially Irish name than McGillicuddy? Mack, a former altar boy who attends weekly Mass, would go a long way toward countering the anti-Catholic image Republicans have in the wake of the Bob Jones and House-chaplain controversies. That would be a big plus in the Northeast and Midwest, and perhaps among Hispanics as well.

Mack himself embodies the political migration of many Catholic voters from staunch Democrat to occasional Republican. He was a registered Democrat until the late 1970s, but not active in politics. "I became frustrated with Jimmy Carter," he says. Mack was president of a



By Roman Genn

NewsMax.com Special Report



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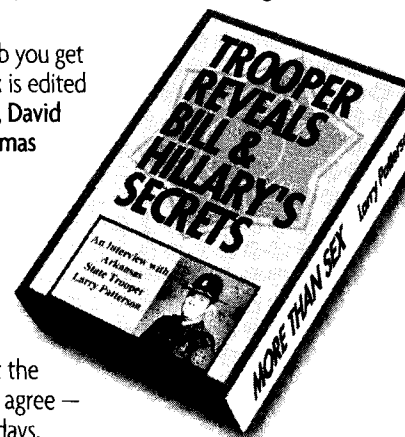
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small bank in Cape Coral and remembers receiving a letter from the federal government telling him at what temperature he could set his thermostat. "It seemed like the government was forcing its way into everything," he recalls. The night Ronald Reagan was elected president, Mack watched the results on television and turned to his wife. "I told her, 'The decision that was made tonight is so important, I have to get involved in it somehow.'" Two years later, he ran for Congress and won—as a Republican.

In Congress, he has been a solid conservative. He is currently head of the Joint Economic Committee, a sort of economic idea factory that issues policy papers instead of writing legislation. He's also a supply-sider who has never met a tax cut he didn't like: His PAC is named after Adam Smith.

Social issues initially took a back seat to Mack's focus on economics. He compiled a near-perfect pro-life voting record in the House, but was perceived by some as pro-choice because he refused to support a federal law to ban abortion outright. He also voted for the ERA. A few years later, however, he changed his mind on both counts.

In 1987, Mack announced for the Senate. It looked like political suicide, because Lawton Chiles, chairman of the powerful Senate Budget Committee, held the seat. But two months later, Chiles said he was quitting. Mack instead faced Buddy MacKay and nicked him by less than a percentage point in a race that featured the immortal line: "Hey, Buddy, you're a liberal!" During the campaign, Bob Graham famously labeled Mack "an ideological wacko." Today, however, the two men are friends: "Most people in politics have some words they'd like to pull out of the ether," says Graham, referring to that old comment. "I think Connie would be a good running mate for Bush."

Indeed, everybody loves Connie. He does a great Nixon impression and enjoys showing off the baseball memorabilia in his office. He's one of the most popular members of the Senate. Mack is a rare creature in Washington: a conviction politician who has no enemies. "He is at once extremely aggressive and has no rough edge," says Mitch Bainwol, Mack's former chief of staff.

And he has an interesting personal story: His family has been cursed by cancer. Both of his parents had it, his younger brother died from it, and he, his wife, and his daughter have all survived it. Last August, Mack had two small carcinomas removed from his back—a minor procedure, and nothing compared with the full-blown melanoma he survived in 1989.

The experience has made Mack and his wife, Priscilla, champions of increased funding for medical research. How could it not? Yet Mack's insistent advocacy—he wants to double the budget of the National Institutes of Health over five years—has caused many conservatives in Congress to grumble that their friend is willing to write a blank check to a federal agency with skewed priorities. (In 1997, NIH spent \$70,000 per AIDS death, compared with \$5,000 for cancer and \$2,000 for heart disease.) It has also caused Mack to part ways with many pro-lifers on embryo research, which depends on cells and tissues obtained from abortions.

Bush and Mack do not have a strong personal relationship. They became familiar with each other in the early 1990s when Mack was calling baseball teams to encourage the sport's expansion into Florida, and Bush was head of the Texas Rangers club. Bush also has said he was impressed with a prayer-breakfast speech Mack gave on the morning of Jeb Bush's inauguration as governor of Florida.

Yet it's obvious the men complement each other well. Mack's D.C. *résumé* adds experience to the ticket. His health-care expertise would allow Bush to focus on education, the other social issue sure to dominate the election. And what Democrat will have the gall to demonize a GOP health-care plan outlined by Connie Mack, cancer survivor?

The only real question is whether Mack would run. Perhaps there's a clue in Mack's own political history. In 1987, when he had done everything but formally announce his Senate campaign, he got cold feet. He didn't feel, in his gut, the need to run; so he pulled out. But then Chiles started talking about raising taxes. A few months later, Mack was back. A few months after that, he was a senator. **NR**

■ CAMPAIGN 2000 II ■

A Capital Issue

The politics of the death penalty

RAMESH PONNURU

JUST a few months ago, it was possible to think that capital punishment was—pardon the pun—a dead issue in American politics. So completely had the pro-execution side triumphed, so undebated was the subject in mainstream politics, that when George W. Bush and other Republicans referred to "the death penalty," they were usually talking about the estate tax. (That's a "death penalty" Republicans oppose.) But all of a sudden, the politics of the issue appear to have changed—and not in Bush's favor.

There are two major reasons the death penalty has resurfaced as an issue after a decade of dormancy. The first is that the Democratic party is increasingly reliant on black voters. In 1998, Democrats ran an often demagogic campaign to persuade blacks that Republicans posed a threat to their civil rights; high turnout among black voters in key races fueled the Democrats' surprisingly strong showing in the elections that fall. (One of the architects of that campaign, Donna Brazile, was picked to manage Al Gore's presidential campaign on the strength of its success.) Making an issue of alleged racial biases in the application of the death penalty could help Democrats stage a reprise.

The second reason the death penalty is now an issue is that the Republican presidential nominee is the governor of the state that leads the nation in number of executions—and leads it by miles. Since the Supreme Court lifted its ban on the practice in 1976, about a third of all the nation's executions have taken place in Texas. That ratio has held under Gov. Bush, and the absolute number of executions has been rising nationally. Since 1995, 126 prisoners have been put

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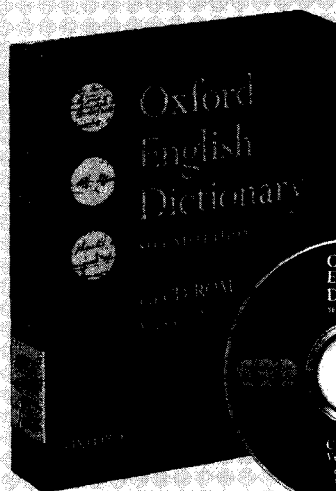
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to death in Texas. That's out of a total of 625 executions in the country during the entire period since 1976.

For a lot of people, statistics like these are cause to cheer Bush for showing energy in the executive. Democrats could use them, however, to argue that Bush has been reckless. Even more, they could be used to paint a scary picture of Texas under Bush: a place where the rivers are dirty, the slums are crowded, people bring pistols to church, and barbarism is the prevailing culture.

So a conjunction of circumstances—the Democrats' need to mobilize the black vote, and their opportunity to slam Bush—has made it tempting for the Democrats to raise the death penalty as an issue. They would never have dared do so ten years ago, though, even had similar conditions obtained. Back then, the Democrats were seen as soft on criminals generally and on the death penalty in particular. In order to combat this perception, Bill Clinton went so far as to interrupt his presidential campaign to go back to Arkansas to preside over the execution of Ricky Ray Rector, who was brain-damaged (as a result of having shot himself after shooting a police officer and another man). Through that move and others, the Democrats have now reestablished their credibility with the public on crime.

Public opinion has also shifted on the topic itself. A Gallup poll in February found that support for the death penalty, while still high at 66 percent, had dropped to its lowest level in 19 years. (Support peaked in 1994, at 80 percent.) Part of the explanation is probably that people no longer feel as threatened by crime now that crime rates have fallen. Also, opponents of the death penalty have been able to focus the public's attention on cases in which innocents have been on death row—and thus on the possibilities that some have actually been executed and others are still slated to die.

A new book, *Actual Innocence*, argues that poor administration of capital punishment has made miscarriages of justice shockingly common, and that many death-row inmates would be exonerated by DNA evidence. Illinois governor George Ryan, a Republican, announced a moratorium on executions in his state in January, after it was shown that more

inmates on death row had been exonerated than executed since the state instituted the death penalty. Other states and the federal government are considering moratoria. A recent movie, *The Green Mile*, also dealt with innocents awaiting execution.

■

**Proponents of the death penalty
value its conclusiveness,
opponents fear the possibility
of a mistake. The latter
sentiment may be ascendant.**

■

The economic boom may also be affecting public attitudes; wealth can lead people to adopt sunnier and less retributive outlooks, and diminish their appreciation of the fact that life sometimes requires tough choices. The public approves of capital punishment in theory, but it might well recoil if it were applied routinely—as presumably it would need to be to yield the deterrent effects that are an important argument for it. The finality of the death penalty has always been a key issue in the argument about it: Proponents value its conclusiveness, but opponents fear the

possibility of a mistake. The latter sentiment may be ascendant.

In the discussion of the changes in public opinion on capital punishment, one factor has been curiously overlooked: Pope John Paul II's opposition to it. One reason for the neglect is that there is some dispute about the precise meaning of his statements, including how authoritatively he intends them to be taken. But it is clear that he is narrowing the circumstances under which Catholics can in good conscience support the death penalty—and it is likely that he will narrow them even more in the future. The effect of this shift is only beginning to be felt. In America, Catholics do not differ substantially from non-Catholics in their views on capital punishment. They may, however, be more squeamish about it in practice, more receptive as a matter of sensibility to an attack on Bush as bloodthirsty. If so, that would be a particular problem for Bush, given the importance he rightly attaches to attracting Catholic voters.

The Pope has also influenced conservatives who are not themselves Catholic. For that reason, among others, support for the death penalty on the right is less monolithic than it used to be. George Will wrote a column on *Actual Innocence* in which he pronounced the current flaws in the administration of the death penalty "intolerable." Pat Robertson just came out for a moratorium.

The stage appears to be set for Al Gore to "triangulate" on the issue. He could explain that he supports the death penalty in principle but has grave concerns about how it is being implemented. He could furrow his eyebrows as he notes that the penalty should not be applied indiscriminately—adding sadly that it is being so applied in some places. Let the nightly news connect the dots.

A few Bush missteps have made him more vulnerable to such a strategy. There was his ghastly remark, quoted in a profile by Tucker Carlson in *Talk* last summer, making fun of Karla Faye Tucker after she had been executed. (The fact that Texas executes women will, in itself, rub some people the wrong way.) There



By Ken Westphal

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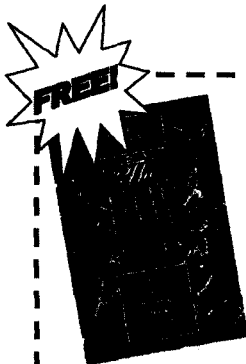
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was his apparent amusement when he was asked during a primary debate about court-appointed lawyers for death-row defendants (some of the lawyers fall asleep during the trials). The impression this creates undermines Bush's professions of compassionate conservatism and reinforces Democratic complaints that he's not serious enough for the presidency. The late-night talk-show hosts are making jokes about Bush and the death penalty: Jay Leno says that Bush's idea of conservation is to use solar power to fry criminals.

Bush has dealt with criticisms by saying that he is executing the laws of his state. A board makes the ultimate decisions about granting clemency; Bush can merely stay an execution for a month. But that explanation sidesteps Bush's responsibility for the entire criminal-justice system through the appointments he makes and the legislation he proposes. Besides, he hardly wants to call more attention to the weakness of his office as governor of Texas.

The better response for Bush would be to remind everyone that supporters of the death penalty are trying to uphold the same value as are opponents: the dignity of human life. (That's why the question is so vexed.) He can point out that lightning strikes more people in Texas than the death penalty does; that Texas executes in fewer than 3 percent of murder cases. It might also be wise to use some rhetoric pitched to Catholic sensibilities, just as Bush's speechwriters quote consciously echo papal language when Bush is making remarks on poverty, the elderly, or abortion. Other supporters of the death penalty can make the argument that DNA evidence will make capital punishment less risky in the future; and that the exoneration of individuals on death row proves that the appeals process already works.

Then again, Gore might decide not to make capital punishment an issue at all. The risks are considerable. There is still that 66 percent support for it; and crime still ranks as a high priority for the public, if not quite as high as it used to be. It would be easy for Gore to overplay his hand. Triangulation is not as easy as Clinton makes it look. Painting Bush as a brute would require a delicacy from Gore for which he is not noted. But don't be surprised if Gore tries anyway. **NR**

■ FOREIGN POLICY ■

A Yellow Peril? No

Excesses of the new anti-China lobby

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

IN recent years, China has become the focus of conservative discontents in foreign policy. The Christian Right accuses it of persecuting religious minorities; "trade hawks" oppose it on behalf of the American worker; what remains of the old "China Lobby" support those Taiwanese who want independence; and defense conservatives argue that China is preparing to challenge American power in the Far East.

This "anti-China Lobby" has been given a great boost in the last few years by the criminal misbehavior of the Clinton administration. But the roots of conservative opposition to the gerontocrats in Beijing go deeper. China is viewed by the Right as a strategic threat and an ideological competitor in the international sphere, as well as a political opportunity in the domestic sphere. These various aspects of the China syndrome are, of course, dependent on one another. If mainland China were not at least a potential strategic threat, it could hardly mount a serious ideological challenge; no one lies awake worrying about the ideological impact of Burma. Nor would there be political dividends if it were not possible to warn American voters, as William Kristol and Robert Kagan do in the current issue of *The National Interest*, that China is hostile to the U.S.

The problem with this interrelated argument is that not enough people are buying it. Take China as an issue to rally the Right. It has the smell of illegitimate opportunism about it. As Owen Harries has pointed out in these pages, foreign policy should be determined by the national interests of the U.S., not by the partisan advantage of the GOP. Even if we discount that objection, however, the polls suggest that though Americans are

today more critical of China than at any other time since Tiananmen—and reasonably so—they are not especially worried about the threat it poses. (Nor, indeed, about any foreign-policy threat.) Those candidates such as Gary Bauer and Steve Forbes who sought to capitalize on anti-China sentiment failed to gain much traction from it; and those who broadly favor engagement with Beijing, such as George W. Bush, were not much harmed by that. If anti-China noises failed to win support in the immediate wake of the Clinton-China campaign-finance scandal, they are hardly likely to succeed politically in the coming years unless China makes them credible.

Which brings us to another question: Is China an ideological competitor of America's? Here the answer is clear: The Right's attempt to present the current Chinese regime as the Soviet Union's ideological heir is absurd. Indeed, China is no longer a Communist country in any real sense. It is authoritarian, not totalitarian, in politics, and capitalist in economics. Though its persecution of minorities and dissidents has clearly worsened just recently, it is still a much freer country than it was when it was our ally against the Soviet Union (though expanding the economic freedom that benefits ordinary Chinese does not seem to interest the new anti-China hands). Above all, China does not possess an ideological model that it believes is in principle applicable to the whole world. On the contrary, it looks abroad to Singapore for a successful authoritarianism that might justify its own morally bankrupt regime. And it does not have the Soviet Union's missionary zeal to challenge the U.S. in every corner of the globe. Curiously, it is the new anti-China hands who preach a worldwide mission, arguing that the United States cannot live in a world "half-slave, half-free" and must therefore aim at the "transformation" (in more candid terms, overthrow) of China and other undemocratic regimes. We are told that undemocratic regimes like China cannot restrain themselves from provocative foreign adventures since that serves to justify their rule at home. There is some sleight of hand in this argument, however. It does not seem to require the transformation of Saudi Arabia.



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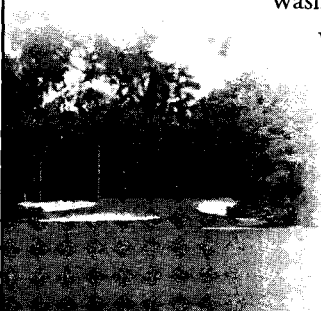
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Consider China's position: It is a country of modest economic strength, political instability, and military power. Its average annual income is less than \$1,000; its economy is growing, but unequally across the country; it is surrounded by strong and potentially hostile powers, notably Japan and India, with which the U.S. has warm relationships; it has the capacity, at best, to fire a small handful of rockets at the U.S. and its main allies, yet is vulnerable to a devastating nuclear response; and there are increasing signs of internal discontent such as the Christian and Falun Gong movements, which the authorities have suppressed in heavy-handed ways. Not surprisingly. For, as the new anti-China hands argue when they are not stressing China's strategic threat, the government in Beijing is nervously authoritarian rather than self-confidently totalitarian. And if it is systematically rearming and seeking to modernize its economy with outside help, almost any government would do the same in these circumstances. The U.S. should, of course, seek to restrain Beijing's program of strategic rearmament, forge whatever defensive alliances seem sensible in response to any regional displays of power by Beijing, and seek political concessions in return for economic and other forms of cooperation. That is strategic common sense.

But the policies proposed by the anti-China Lobby go well beyond such cautious blocking moves. They would promise, in effect, to protect Taiwan against a Chinese military response to any declaration of independence; they seek to prevent "permanent normal trade relations" with China and its entry into the World Trade Organization; and they aim to aggravate any difficulties faced by Beijing in the hope of effecting its democratic "transformation."

From the most Americo-centric standpoint, these are curious policies. To begin with, the status quo of "one China" has been American (and Taiwanese) policy for the last 50 years. It keeps the peace. And it preserves the legitimate interests of Taiwan. Though the American people might be prepared to defend Taiwan against an unprovoked attack, they show no desire to be dragged into a war with China by Taiwanese voters seeking a merely legal

gloss on their already existing independence. And if Chinese officials occasionally issue bloodcurdling threats against Taiwan, these are either glossed over very quickly, or made in response to hints of Taiwanese independence, or expressions of a great-power nostalgia that have yet to determine policy—and that the new anti-China hands discount as rhetorical excess when issued by *Russian* leaders.

The new anti-China hands dismiss American corporate expectations of big profits from Chinese trade as wildly exaggerated. They are quite right. For the same reason, however, their warnings about the dangers of permanent normal trade relations and Chinese membership in the WTO are equally overdone. China is a modest contributor to world trade; its share is less than that of Holland. All of the current evils (slave labor, very low wages, etc.) have occurred with China outside the WTO. And its membership would give some leverage to other member-states and WTO officials not only to regulate such practices but also to force Beijing to open up parts of the economy now closed to foreigners. Of course, China will not comply with these rules unless the WTO compels it. Nor will France. If we are to surrender the power to intervene that WTO membership gives us, however, what will replace it? At least Pat Buchanan has such a lever: namely, a variable tariff based on reciprocal arrangements; but somehow the anti-China Lobby seems unlikely to embrace Buchananism, however logically.

It is the general strategy of aggravating China's difficulties that is most self-contradictory, however. As the new anti-China hands argue in a different context, the nervous authoritarians in Beijing may well be tempted to launch foreign adventures as a solution to domestic difficulties. Maximizing those difficulties is therefore to maximize China's incentive to seize Quemoy or Matsu, lob a rocket at Taiwan, or saberrattle towards Japan or some other U.S. ally. Such adventures, once begun, often lead in unexpected directions. Is it really sensible to court a war with China because you calculate that China may court a war with you? Or should the new anti-China hands perhaps have a nice quiet lie-down?

NR

■ THE DRUG WAR ■

Teach Them Well

Drug talk that fails

RYAN H. SAGER

VISIT a college party, and you're likely to see people smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol—and, quite often, smoking pot and using various other drugs. This scene will horrify some, but it won't surprise anyone familiar with today's college-age youth. Even though the generation of students now in college is the first to have been exposed to anti-drug messages since birth, a large portion of them seem not to have been convinced. By age 18, about 55 percent of students have tried some illicit drug, and 26 percent of college-age kids report having used an illicit drug within the last month. These numbers are up significantly from the beginning of the 1990s. This drug use may or may not represent a serious problem—most of these people go on to lead decent, productive lives—but it does testify to the ineffectiveness of anti-drug education and advertising in this country.

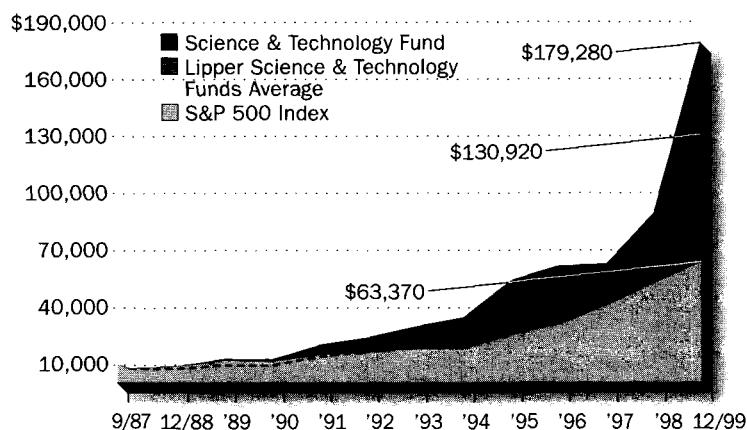
At a time when educators and the federal government are as committed as ever to the public-private Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program, and to a new \$1-billion five-year taxpayer-funded anti-drug advertising campaign, it is appropriate to evaluate the return we're getting on this investment. If you ask anti-drug activists, some will say these programs have had a demonstrable impact on young people's attitudes toward drugs as well as their use of drugs. Others, however, are concerned that these programs have not proven their worth and could be diverting resources from more effective ways of preventing drug use by young people. According to this view, the public-education front of the drug war has

Mr. Sager is a reporter for *Reason* magazine.

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been little more than an expensive placebo.

DARE, which costs approximately \$220 million a year (including \$1.75 million in taxpayer funding), is by far the most popular anti-drug program in American schools. About 75 percent of school districts use it. While parents and politicians tend to view DARE as sacred, most people are unaware that the program has long faced intense skepticism from experts. Although some studies have found positive effects (mostly attitude changes) over the short term, DARE has never been proven to have any lasting effect on the likeliness of children to use drugs later in life. Numerous studies, in fact, have found that the program has no long-term effect whatsoever. Sending police officers into classrooms to lecture children on the dangers of drugs—the gist of DARE's approach—may lower their opinions of drugs temporarily, but the lessons seem to fade quickly.

For years, DARE officials confronted with these negative studies have dismissed the studies as inadequate in scope. But a recent study by researchers at the University of Kentucky should put those objections to rest. The study examined a group of young people ten years after they completed the DARE curriculum—and concluded that these students were just as likely to use drugs as a group of students who had been exposed to just a minimal drug-education curriculum in their health classes. Though DARE officials have complained that the study should have compared DARE students to students who had received no drug education at all, such a sample would be nearly impossible to find. Furthermore, the argument that DARE should be preserved even if it is no more effective than a shorter and less expensive program seems untenable.

Charlie Parsons, executive director of DARE America, doesn't believe the University of Kentucky study. He claims the program's curriculum has changed significantly since the period when the tracked students had it, and he puts his own spin on the data: "The effects dissipate somewhat, and that's not a surprise. . . . It shows there's a need for reinforcement, and we totally agree with that." He even offers a solution to

any problem that may exist: Extend the DARE program. The students in the University of Kentucky study were exposed to DARE only in elementary school. Mr. Parsons points to a study from Ohio University that shows lower drug use among students who continue with DARE during middle school and high school.

Despite Parsons's optimism, some researchers remain skeptical. Joel Brown, executive director of the Center for Educational Research and Development in Berkeley, questions the validity of the Ohio study on methodological grounds. He also notes that there is still no research showing that the program has any lasting effect.

■

The most widely used drug-education program in America has never proven that it can prevent young people from using drugs.

■

More generally, Brown is skeptical of the "no-use" approach used by DARE and other programs. "The reality is that most kids will experiment with drugs," he says. He doesn't condone experimentation, but thinks a wiser approach would be "telling kids the truth about drugs . . . trusting young people's ability to make decisions if given information." Brown thinks that kids who are at risk, or who already have problems with drugs, are unable to get useful advice from a program like DARE and could end up in deep trouble. Furthermore, Brown fears that when young people experiment with drugs (or observe others doing so) and find that the dire warnings they heard in DARE were overblown, they will feel that their elders have been lying to them for years. This, he says, could create "cognitive dissonance" that will lead them to reject not just the message but the messenger.

The new anti-drug advertising campaign has the same problem: It has little room for a balanced view of drugs and is, for the most part, a variation on the theme of "Just say no." "It's just trying to scare people into not using drugs," says

Brown. "There's no evidence that it really has an impact."

Whether or not it has an impact, of course, is an important question, now that the federal government has embarked on a \$1-billion ad campaign. But it is almost impossible to study the effects of such a nationwide campaign on kids, because there is no control group—no similar kids who have not seen the ads—to use for comparison.

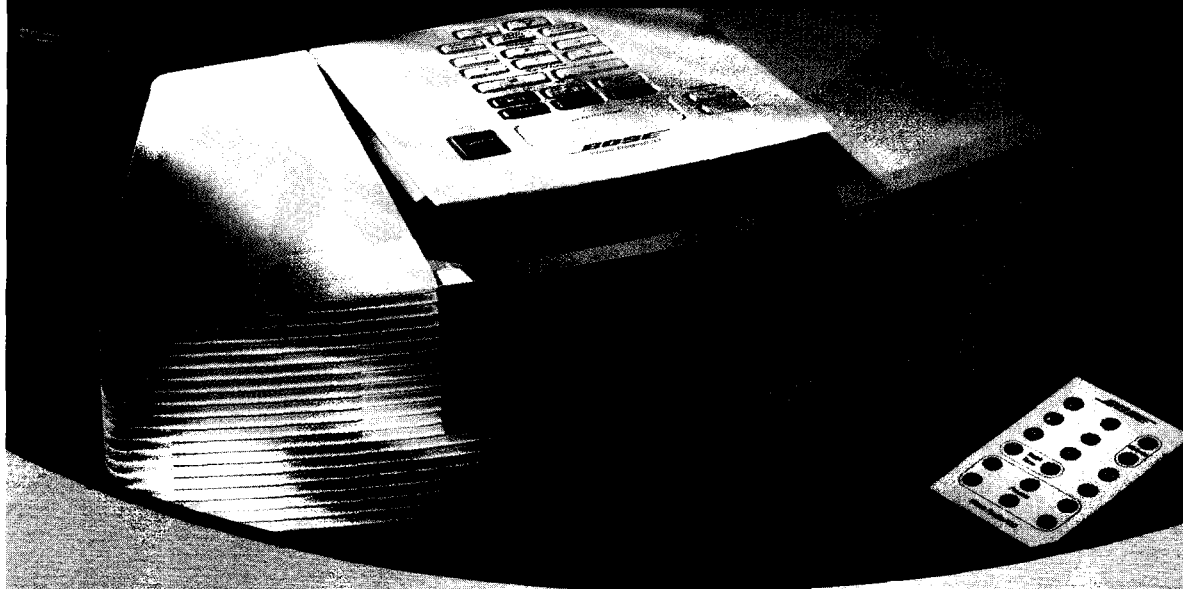
The Partnership for a Drug-Free America, the organization responsible for most of the anti-drug advertising on television, admits as much. Steve Dnistrian, a Partnership official, points to a correlation between anti-drug advertising and teenage drug use that he believes proves the effectiveness of the new ad campaign. "We're about two years into a very encouraging flattening, if not decline" in teenage drug use, he claims. In fact, according to the University of Michigan's annual Monitoring the Future study, from 1998 to 1999—the study's first opportunity to measure the effect of the new anti-drug ads—teen drug use actually increased (though to a lesser extent than in most years during the 1990s). More important, the flattening to which Dnistrian refers clearly predates the advertising campaign.

What is left after a careful examination of anti-drug education and advertising is a fairly bleak picture for the anti-drug forces. The most widely used drug-education program in America has never proven that it can prevent young people from using drugs, and evidence for the effectiveness of anti-drug advertising is circumstantial at best. Hundreds of millions of dollars go into these programs every year, yet no one can point to any concrete results.

The problem is an anti-drug establishment with no interest in reconsidering its message, or even how the message is delivered. Kids know that smoking one joint will not ruin their lives, so telling them that it will can only make them more cynical than they already are. What we need is a fundamental rethinking of how we talk to kids about drugs. The government is not likely to do this anytime soon—so in the short term, it will be up to parents, alone, to give their kids realistic advice on drugs.

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Federal Cases

The Court and its key project

MICHAEL S. GREVE

OVER the last five years, renewing federalism has been the Supreme Court's key project. In its current term, the Court will decide a number of federalism cases. Perhaps the most important of them is *Stenberg v. Carhart*, scheduled for oral argument on April 25. The Court's first major abortion case since *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* in 1992, *Stenberg* will decide whether the *Casey* decision permits states to ban partial-birth abortions.

While *Stenberg* is not, technically, a case about federalism, it provides the Supreme Court with a singular opportunity to take a small but politically significant step toward more open, decentralized, and competitive politics. For this reason, *Stenberg* is central not only to the abortion question but also to the Supreme Court's federalism agenda and to the future of conservative politics. These things are intertwined, and one must hope that the Court will see the connection.

The Court's federalism cases since 1995—virtually all of them decided by a bare 5–4 majority of conservative and centrist justices—hew to a distinct pattern. First, the Court's federalism tends to benefit state and local governments, rather than citizens. For example, the Court has granted state governments—but not private employers—exemptions from damage lawsuits under certain federal labor laws. Second, with one arguable exception (*City of Boerne v. Flores*, the 1997 decision that invalidated the Religious Freedom Restoration Act), the Court has been federalist on

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issues of marginal political significance, such as the Gun Free School Zones Act, struck down in *United States v. Lopez* (1995). Third, the Court has tended to concentrate its fire on congressional overreaching, not on previous erosions of federalism by the Court itself.

These decisions have advanced federalism in an incremental fashion. If the Court is serious about federalist principles, however, it must assert them on an issue that really matters to citizens. Moreover, the Court must follow its federalist instincts even—indeed, especially—when the national imposition at issue is the fault of the Court rather than the Congress.

Abortion on demand is, of course, the most glaring example of such an imposition. Partial-birth-abortion bans have been enacted in over half the states (in at least four states, over the governor's veto). Yet, following the tenor (if not the holdings) of *Roe* and *Casey*, federal courts have invalidated virtually all those bans. The time has come for the Supreme Court to recognize that this ruthless nationalism is threatening its own federalism agenda.

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In the process of governing themselves, citizens will offend Barbra Streisand. The Supreme Court must be prepared to tolerate that.
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For all the folklore about the Court as the guardian of liberty and the Court's own counter-majoritarian bluster, the justices cannot for any length of time enforce constitutional norms against the will of the country and without a political base of support. The Court learned that lesson in 1937, when it had to surrender federalism (among other constitutional principles) to the New Deal's nationalist aspirations.

The modern Supreme Court's federalism is encountering a lot of powerful enemies—and very few friends. Liberal elites and constituencies are reflexively nationalist. Business interests favor a national arena, for a number of economic reasons. Congressmen and senators of

both parties cheerfully vote for further extensions of federal authority, often near unanimously (witness the proliferation of federal crimes, which now include the impersonation of a 4-H member). The only substantial force for federalism is the conservative movement—including, prominently, the right-to-life constituency that is hoping for a favorable decision in *Stenberg*.

In this key case, a decision permitting some state regulation of abortion would resound well beyond abortion politics—because more decentralized, federalist politics would result in more conservative politics pretty much across the board. For one thing, most states are more conservative than Washington, D.C. Over 30 states have acceded to the National Rifle Association's most "extreme" demand and authorized concealed-weapons permits; in Washington, meanwhile, the NRA is playing permanent defense.

Decentralized politics also favor conservatives because they are more experimental and competitive. They allow conservatives to show that their experiments work, in due course leading citizens to embrace those experiments. (School choice is a perfect example.) In contrast, liberal experiments usually involve robbing Peter to pay Paul; and the citizens and businesses receiving the short end of the stick tend to vote with their feet and move to more hospitable jurisdictions. Liberals can win only by inducing Washington, D.C., to cut off the exit routes. For all these reasons, conservative constituencies have a huge stake in *Stenberg's* promise of a more decentralized, federalist Constitution.

Alas, Justices Kennedy and O'Connor, whose votes decide federalism cases, do not like federalism's conservative constituencies. Delighted to discuss the finer points of federalism with a bipartisan coalition of respectable governors, they recoil when federalism might give more running room to uncouth Catholics who wave placards of dismembered babies.

Justice Kennedy in particular has amply demonstrated his distaste for conservative reform projects. Generally a staunch federalist, Kennedy helped overturn conservative state referenda on term limits and gay rights. His firmest endorsement of federalism came in *City of Boerne*—a defeat for religious conservatives. While conservatives muted their criticism of the result

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in *Boerne* precisely because it was reached on federalism grounds, a judicial slap at conservatives in *Stenberg* might well eviscerate all political support for the Supreme Court's federalism.

To illustrate, it helps to think ahead to a possible case involving a federal ban on partial-birth abortions. Having twice come close to overriding President Clinton's veto of such legislation, Congress is trying again. The House passed the ban for a third time in April, and an adverse ruling in *Stenberg* would surely add momentum to the legislative effort. Under the Supreme Court's federalism precedents, though, neither the commerce clause nor the Fourteenth Amendment (nor any other constitutional provision) provides a basis for congressional legislation.

So the Supreme Court would probably be right to invalidate such a federal statute. Were such a decision to come after a judicial ruling in *Stenberg* that states may regulate (some) abortions, it would be a clever way of advancing federalism. Liberals would cheer the pro-choice result and grumble about the reasoning; conservatives would do the reverse. Neither side would mobilize seriously to overturn the decision; both would take the fight to the states.

In contrast, consecutive decisions to the effect that neither the states nor the Congress may regulate even the most gruesome abortion procedures would signal that the Supreme Court's commitment isn't to federalism but to judicial supremacy.

Federalism means that citizens in some states will, in the process of governing themselves, offend Barbra Streisand's sensibilities. The Supreme Court must be prepared to tolerate such openness—or else, forget about federalism.

The Supreme Court's federalism is facing an uncertain future. Let a future President Gore replace a single conservative or moderate justice, and federalism—along with school choice and government neutrality in matters of race—will turn from realistic expectation to constitutional corpse. (Abortion on demand will be enshrined for decades.) If constitutional federalism is to have a future, Bush must win. The federalist justices, though, must do their part. They must realize that *Stenberg* is central to federalism's future—and decide accordingly. **NR**

■ CULTURE WATCH ■

Homer Never Nods

The importance of
The Simpsons

JONAH GOLDBERG

'KIDS, you tried your best and you failed miserably. The lesson is: Never try." Is this the sort of lesson we want Homer Simpson to be teaching our kids? That's the question people who don't understand *The Simpsons* have been asking, for a very long time. Indeed, *The Simpsons* is now the longest-running sitcom on television, and it recently became the longest-running cartoon in television history, surpassing *The Flintstones*.

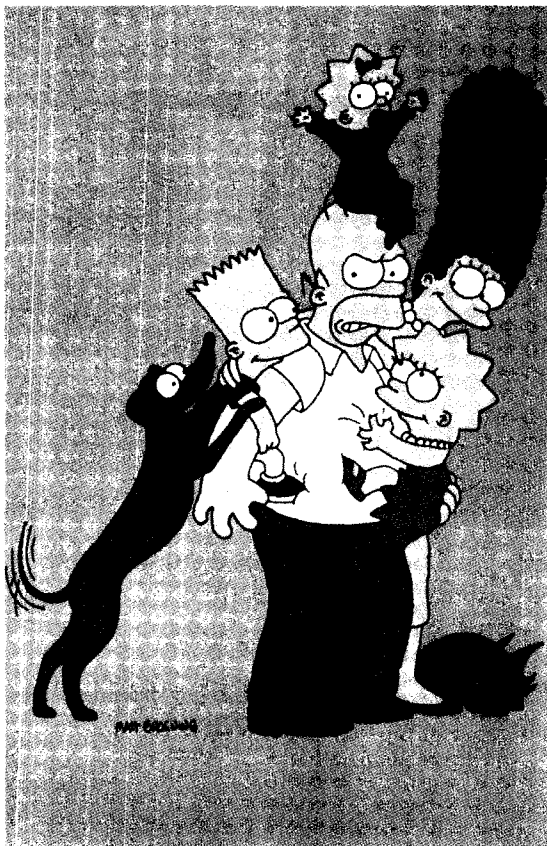
In 1990, drug czar William Bennett picked a fight with Bart Simpson, the show's spiky-haired brat. Visiting a Pittsburgh drug-treatment center,

Bennett saw a poster of Bart with the caption, "Underachiever and Proud of It." Bennett responded, "You guys aren't watching *The Simpsons*, are you? That's not going to help you any." The firestorm caused the normally intractable Bennett to back-pedal, saying he really didn't know anything about the show. (His wife, however, told the *New York Times* in 1998 that their kids still weren't allowed to watch the program.)

Many conservatives still share this negative view of *The Simpsons*—and that's regrettable, because it's possibly the most intelligent, funny, and even politically satisfying TV show ever. *The Simpsons* is unique among sitcoms. First, it is a cartoon, which allows it to do and say things unimaginable for other shows. Second, of all the successful programs to make serious political points, it is the only one that is reliably funny when it does. *All in the Family*, *M*A*S*H*, and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* were excellent shows in their prime, but it's fair to say that when they were funny they weren't political and that when they were political they weren't very funny—and they were, invariably and predictably, liberal.

The Simpsons, however, is never predictable; and its satire spares nothing and no one. In one episode, for example, we see signs inside the Republican convention that read, "We want what's worst for everyone" and "We're just plain evil"; but we also see signs at the Democratic convention that read, "We hate life and ourselves" and "We can't govern."

This even-handedness is noteworthy. Against the backdrop of conventional sitcoms, it makes *The Simpsons* damn near reactionary; if 50 percent of the jokes are aimed leftward, that's 49.5 percent more than we usually get. At the end of an episode originally aired in the spring of 1992, Sideshow Bob is hauled off to prison for attempted murder. He declares, "I'll be back. You can't keep the Democrats out of the White House forever.



The Simpsons © 1999 20th Century Fox Film Corp.

And when they get in, I'm back on the street! With all of my criminal buddies!" The mayor of Springfield, Diamond Joe Quimby, is a corrupt, womanizing lush who met his wife when she worked at "La Maison Derrière," the local brothel. When the Rush Limbaugh character accuses Quimby of being an "illiterate, tax-cheating, wife-swapping, pot-smoking Spend-o-crat," Quimby replies, "Hey, I'm no longer illiterate." Did I forget to mention that Quimby has a distinct Kennedy accent?

When Grandpa Simpson starts receiving royalty checks for work he didn't do, Bart and Lisa ask, "Didn't you wonder why you were getting checks for doing nothing?" Grandpa responds, "I figured, 'cuz the Democrats were in power again." The episode dealing with gun rights—"The Cartridge Family"—makes *The Simpsons* the only sitcom in memory to treat gun control with any fairness:

Marge: Mmm! No! [pulls gun from Homer] No one's using this gun! The TV said you're 58 percent more likely to shoot a family member than an intruder!

Homer: TV said that . . . ? But I have to have a gun! It's in the Constitution!

Lisa: Dad! The Second Amendment is just a remnant from revolutionary days. It has no meaning today!

Homer: You couldn't be more wrong, Lisa. If I didn't have this gun, the king of England could just walk in here anytime he wants and start shoving you around. [pushing Lisa] Do you want that? [pushing her harder] Huh? Do you?

Lisa: [quietly indignant] No . . .

Homer: All right, then.

But the satire of *The Simpsons* is not primarily aimed at political figures. It is aimed at all of society's false pieties and therefore works at many more levels than other TV shows. Serious issues like environmentalism, immigration, gay rights, and Christian fundamentalism get the full treatment. But so do

comic-book and science-fiction nerds, Jerry Lewis, the French, you name it. Many jabs are highbrow and well hidden, making them all the more rewarding. For example, in one episode the Simpsons put baby Maggie in the "Ayn Rand School for Tots," where we briefly see a banner that reads "A is for 'A.'"

What should dismay liberals about this is that so many of today's pieties are constructs of the Left. Conservatives are accustomed to being mocked constantly in the popular culture. But the experience must come as something of a shock for hothouse liberals. For example, Homer Simpson's mother is a '60s radical still on the lam. How did she dodge the feds? "I had help from my friends in the underground. Jerry Rubin gave me a job marketing his line of health shakes. I proofread Bobby Seale's cookbook. And I ran credit checks at Tom Hayden's Porsche dealership." Some important pretensions are being punctured here—but not the usual ones.

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If Apu Nahasapeemapetilon, the Indian manager of the local Kwik-E-Mart, were portrayed—with his outrageously stereotyped accent, religious oddities, bullet scars, and unapologetic price gouging—as a character in a live-action television show, there would be riots. In an episode dealing with immigration, "Much Apu About Nothing," Springfield is overcome by anti-immigrant hysteria. Protesters swarm around the Kwik-E-Mart bearing signs that read, "The Only Good Foreigner is Rod Stewart" and "Get Eurass Back to Eurasia." At first Apu forges a new identity. Reporter: "Apu, is the rumor true that you're actually Indian?" Apu: "By the gods of Vishnu, that is a lie!" But he thinks better of it. He explains, "I cannot deny my roots and keep up this charade. I only did it because I love this land, where I have the freedom to say,

and to think, and to charge whatever I want!"

In a wonderful essay in the December issue of *Political Theory*, University of Virginia English professor Paul Cantor makes a strong case that *The Simpsons* celebrates many, if not most, of the best conservative principles: the primacy of family, skepticism about political authority, distrust of abstractions. For example, as Cantor points out, the residents of Springfield are more religious than almost any other cast on television today. Springfield residents pray and attend church every Sunday.

Many detractors look at Homer Simpson, the oafish father, or at Bart, the proud underachiever, and assume—partly because the show is a cartoon, partly because it is on Fox—that the program is a cheaply drawn version of *Married . . . with Children*. The reality is that virtually every episode ends on an uplifting note (a distinct contrast with, say, the more nihilistic hits of the 1990s like *Seinfeld*): Homer's authority is affirmed, albeit tenuously, and family bonds are tightened. Many think the show is anti-family values (Homer: "Oh, my God! Space aliens! Don't eat me! I have a wife and kids. Eat them!"), when in fact the show is vastly more honest about family life than most other programs—and is therefore more affecting. Homer: "Wait, that's it! I know now what I can offer you that no one else can . . . Complete and utter dependence!"

Indeed, Homer is probably the greatest parody of them all. Because he is a fool, he offers a perfect way to mock the shortcomings of the increasingly soft American male. "To alcohol," he toasts, "the cause of, and solution to, all of life's problems." At the same time, because he is a fool, when he is right about something he is the perfect foil against elite received wisdom: "The information superhighway showed the average American what some nerds think about *Star Trek*."

Sadly, the show has declined somewhat this season, partly because there are so few issues left for the writers to tackle. Still, its impact on an entire generation can't be overstated. And it gives proof of the axiom that if you think there's nothing good on TV, you're not looking hard enough. **NR**

Worse than Clinton

The nightmare of President Gore

NOEMIE EMERY

THE best thing about a possible presidency of Albert Gore Jr. is that after eight years of Hillary Clinton, Tipper Gore as First Lady would be a relief. But this about exhausts the upside of a Gore win, for along with Tipper comes Al. And while Tipper would be a relief after Hillary, he would not be a relief after Bill. In fact, he would make Clinton look better. Though volunteers and interns would be safe from presidential groping, the country at large would suffer. Below are five reasons why.

Gore as utopian and dogmatist. Clinton at heart believes in little beyond his self-interest, which, if a flaw, at least centers him. Thus his approach to government—after his drubbing in the '94 mid-term elections—tended to small, incremental, symbolic measures; too small, or too empty, to do too much damage. Gore, on the other hand, has large, sweeping theories. He shows every sign of utopian thinking, of the belief in vast, comprehensive, and definitive solutions in which, with the right words on the right kind of paper, the vagaries of life, law, and human nature can be ironed out, once and for all. So, while Gore may appear moderate on some issues—defense, entitlements—his approach to issues is anything but. As his biographer Bill Turque writes, "*Earth in the Balance* [Gore's 1992 environmentalist tome] is the essential Gore: thoughtful, earnest, ambitious, crammed with facts, and breath-takingly grandiose." It is "charged with the evangelistic fervor of a man who believes he can save the world."

More of a conviction interventionist than is Bill Clinton

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(even more so than was Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was really an improviser, trying to maneuver his way through a national crisis), Gore seems to favor Draconian measures to force the shape of life in his country and planet into the conditions he sees as ideal. He is a believer in government mandates to create the "right" mix of races and genders in

all possible settings; to redirect funds to his favored technologies; and to remake modern life around his favorite project—the elimination of cars. Few things would escape Gore's federal bossiness: He would like to see Washington involved in laying sidewalks for suburbs and untangling traffic jams. And these ends would be pressed in an overwrought climate of crisis and urgency.

Doubtless, Gore believes that all this would lead to a brighter world—think of a population that "looks like America" bicycling everywhere—but the trouble with most kinds of utopian thinking is not the end in mind, but the result. As history has shown, time and time over, the result tends to be the opposite of the desired goal. Utopian schemes double back on their founders. And who knows how far Gore might go?

A politician? A born politician, Bill Clinton accepts the din of the process and even enjoys it. Gore, an unnatural politician, pushed into the field by his ambitious parents, shows no feel for the process at all. Discussion and dissent are treated as treason. Opponents are seen, not as citizens to be won over,

but as blood enemies to be destroyed. Dealing with others has not been Gore's forte. In Congress, he seldom wrote laws with others, but held hearings to showcase himself. In the Clinton administration, the difference was obvious. Clinton, says Bill Turque, "took dispute and debate in



By David Smith

stride, but Gore, once dug in, often became defensive and dismissive, flashing his 'Gore glare' across the table at those who displeased him." One who displeased him was Ward Connerly, who recalls in his book *Creating Equal* a meeting that he and his anti-quota allies had with Gore and Clinton in 1998. Clinton was cordial, perhaps insincerely, while Gore "sat stiff as his stereotype, his mouth compressed into a disapproving slit, and his eyes boring holes into those of us whose ideas he found most distasteful."

Another Gore biographer, Bob Zelnick, relates that the hearings Gore held as a senator on global warming were known as "The Inquisition." Skeptical scientists, always outnumbered, were badgered by hostile questions from the chair. Said one participant, Arizona State University scientist Robert Balling, "What Gore could not disprove, he sought to discredit." Ted Koppel of ABC was astonished when Gore, as vice president, urged him to look into a supposed connection between the coal industry and scientists who took issue with Gore on the "greenhouse effect." Koppel found it odd that Gore, whom he considers "scientifically literate," should try to dispose of an opposing argument with strong-arm political tactics. When a Gore mentor coauthored an article that disputed Gore's claims, and then died shortly after, Gore launched an assault on the other coauthors, accusing them of duping and using a dying and addled old codger. (A lawsuit resulted, which the coauthors won.) "Part of Al Gore's makeup is a moralistic streak that makes it hard to have a diversity of viewpoints," says James Blumstein, one of Gore's old law professors.

Gore appears uneasy with the process of politics, and may not really like democracy. We often say that we don't care for presidents who are "political." We may get one who isn't. How will we like it then?

The racemonger. From time to time, Bill Clinton has done his sly best to disturb race relations, with talk of imagined church-burnings and comments such as, "I don't know why some people think it's a good idea to resegregate our universities"—a reference to equality advocates like Ward Connerly. The reason for this is quite simple: Clinton wants non-whites to think they are menaced by right-wing white racists and therefore need him (and Al Gore) to protect them. But where Clinton is sly, and may not believe it, Gore is outspoken, and does. In the past several years, Gore has made a number of frightening statements, guaranteed to assure that Americans will view one another with heightened suspicion and that the happy day of color-blindness will not arrive too soon. He is at home with the kind of talk that compares conservatives to Klan members, and quota opponents to James Earl Ray. He has suggested that foes of preferences were indifferent to the hideous dragging death of a black man in Texas two years ago. And he repeatedly asserts that "color-blind" is, in fact, a code word for "racist," behind which lurk the worst bigots.

Not surprisingly, Gore was the point man in the administration's battle for quotas, touring the country to slander his opponents. Ward Connerly met him again in Washington State two years ago, where Connerly was urging an anti-preferences initiative (which won). Gore once more put his opponents in pointy white hoods. He "was very much the

figure I remembered from our White House meeting... hard-edged and humorless, a hatchet-faced true-believer. He railed against us as if we were church-burners," writes Connerly. Ranted Gore, "The winds of hate are blowing in Washington"; but any hate in the air was coming largely from himself.

Clinton's failures on race have been largely ones of omission. A southern liberal with an empathetic persona, he was perfectly poised to talk the civil-rights establishment out of the identity politics it had embraced and to lead the whole country to a post-racial era, with "affirmative action" based on outreach and training. Instead, he clung to divisive issues like quotas, mainly to shore up the base of his party, with a little paranoia-rousing as a bonus. With a President Gore, there would be nothing subtle at all; his approach would be nakedly and unrelentingly divisive. The likely result of a Gore regime would be to set race relations back, with blacks angry at whites for trying (as Gore claims) to suppress them, and whites livid at Gore for calling them racists.



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A single, nasty dimension. Bill Clinton features two different personas. On normal occasions, he exudes bonhomie; when he is threatened, he bares an underside of attack, smear, and slander. Usually, this underside is managed by staff or comes out only in flashes. "You know what they say about her in Richmond," Clinton gallantly said about Kathleen Willey. This remark and similar things—the petulant spite of the post-dress non-confession—have given us a glimpse of the prince Clinton is. With Gore, however, there are no different aspects. He cannot inspire—he doesn't know how to—and he cannot use wit to disable a rival. His one campaign tactic is to scare people about others' motives; and his one public mode is attack. Throughout his career, he has used the most extreme forms of expression: calling those who differ with him on race-related questions bigots or sympathizers with murderers; those who differ with him on foreign policy quislings or traitors; those who differ with him on social policy willing killers of the poor. To this, his stiff public guise has acted as decoy. "His rhetoric is like Bob Dornan's, but nobody notices," Tucker Carlson has quoted someone who has. Another person who has noticed is Michael Barone, ranking political expert on everything. Gore enjoys "sinking his political fangs into the flesh of the other side and ripping it," he says. And one who can certainly vouch for this is Connerly, who has the following memory of the White House meeting between quota opponents and Clinton-Gore. As they filed out, Clinton shook their hands warmly. Gore, by contrast, crushed Connerly's hand in his own so hard that Connerly, a beefy six-footer, almost cried

out in pain. With Clinton, one had at least bogus civility. Bad trade.

Lies, lies, always. And then, of course, there are lies. Franklin Roosevelt and John Kennedy had their faults, but when they said things like, "The Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor," or, "The Soviets have placed missiles ninety miles from Florida," one could be reasonably certain that these things had happened. With Gore, one could never be sure. He could mean that the Japanese had bombed Cuba or that the Cubans had invaded Hawaii. Or he could mean that nothing at all had happened. Gore lies more than other presidents did; more even than Clinton. He certainly lies more *oddly* than anyone else in public life. Clinton lied when attacked, Gore lies for no reason; Clinton lied to cover up embarrassing incidents, Gore lies when he has done nothing shameful; Clinton lied when big things were at issue, Gore lies to no purpose at all. Clinton's lies were ingenious, leaving room for maneuver: It depends on what "is" means; sex is not sex, in some parts of the Bible; the governor did not rape Mrs. Broadrick, when it is obvious that the governor was the state attorney general at the time and Mrs. Broadrick was known by another name. Gore is incapable of this kind of finesse.



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Clinton lies when he thinks no one can catch him: How was he to know about Monica's garment? Gore lies when the damning proof is self-evident: when the pro-life votes are a matter of record; when he is on tape urging the joys of tobacco, years after his sister died. Weirdly, Gore lies when the truth will not hurt him, and where any advantage is outweighed by the flap that occurs when he is found out. There is nothing shameful in changing one's mind on big issues like abortion. There was nothing shameful about Gore's Vietnam war service—he spent five months overseas as a military journalist—but he implied that he had spent years in the infantry. There was nothing wrong with his work as a journalist in Nashville—he wrote an exposé that got several people indicted—but he claimed that he had sent many people to jail. The embellishments proceed ever onward and upward. He was a war hero. He was a heroic and crusading journalist. He was a romantic hero, the model for *Love Story*. He wrote speeches in 1968 for Hubert Humphrey. He invented the Internet. He "found" Love Canal.

All presidents lie, at some time, for some purpose, but when one of them crosses the line into chronic mendacity, we are in new and dangerous territory. In recent years, we have had three such presidents—Johnson, Nixon, and Clinton—and each convulsed the political system. Two faced impeachment proceedings, and two were forced into early retirement. A strained relation to the reality principle is a positive marker for a turbulent tenure.

CLEARLY THE WRONG MAN

Gore, of course, does have his assets, and everyone knows what they are. He is a ferocious hard worker, with high intelligence and ample experience. No one denies that he has one kind of intelligence—the kind that allows a person to master an issue—but whether this is the kind that makes a good president is a question that hasn't been asked often enough. We have an idea of what makes a good leader, and the qualities seem to be these: balance, proportion, judgment, the flexibility to respond to a new kind of crisis, the ability to lead one's own party and still rise above it, the ability to use or to lead other people, and a sense of the shape of the field. From everything we know, these traits do not describe Gore. Rather, he is rigid, dogmatic, partisan, lacking in proportion and balance, and hostile to give-and-take.

It is significant that the presidentially helpful traits have to do as much with character as they do intelligence. They bring to mind the famous remark of Justice Holmes about FDR: "a second-class intellect but a first-class temperament." This is the combination that seems to mark leaders of men. Politics is an art, not a science, and rests more on talent than brains. It tends to involve feel, rather than intellect: a feel for what is possible at each given moment (and how to expand the possible's limits); above all, a feeling for when and how to use pressure, and then when and how to let go.

Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt are possibly the only good presidents to be in the first rank of intellect, and they owed most of their success to their character. With second-class intellects and first-class temperaments, you tend to get good and great presidents. With first-rate intellects and lesser temperaments, you don't. In the former group are Washington, Jackson, FDR, Truman, Eisenhower, Reagan, and Kennedy. In the latter are John Adams, Madison, Wilson, Hoover, Johnson, Nixon, Carter, and Clinton. With a first-class intellect and a second-class temperament, you get Hoover and Carter, who did not measure up to the crises they faced. With a first-class intellect and a quite *bad* temperament, you get Johnson and Nixon, who, for all of their gifts and achievements, left the national fabric in tatters.

Peggy Noonan, in her self-described screed against Hillary Clinton, has charted the sorrow and pity of the Clinton years: the lost promise, the vanished opportunities, the expense of talent and effort on mere political survival. If Clinton has been clever enough not to derail the economy, and so has left people pleased with their material circumstances, he is also leaving behind a surliness about public life, a residue of fatigue and bad feeling. We are richer as stockholders, but poorer as citizens, an odd and an ironic legacy for a man who saw himself as the heir to FDR and Kennedy. Gore's personal failings are different from Clinton's—there is less lust, more hypocrisy, more fanaticism, more ill-disguised meanness—but they are more important, and more threatening, to the country's well-being. In Albert Gore Jr., we would get, in one, neat, earth-toned package, the pettiness of Adams and Carter, the inflexibility of Wilson and Hoover, the grandiosity of Wilson and Johnson, the slash-and-burn tactics of Nixon, and the veracity of Johnson, Nixon, and Clinton. Thus could we look back on the days of William J. Clinton and sigh.

NR

The Full Gore

See the man in his plan

RICHARD LOWRY

AL Gore's late-March speech unveiling a new plan for campaign-finance reform was classic Gore. There was the (slightly unhinged) personal element, as the vice president reached back to his father's 1970 defeat in Tennessee, allegedly at the hands of special interests, as the source of his own lifelong commitment to campaign-finance reform. There was the self-justification. According to Gore, in 1996 "Democrats, along with Republicans, engaged in fund-raising that pushed the system to the breaking point," and "I've got the scars to prove it." The scars? How about the stains? And there was utopian aspiration ("Our ultimate goal must be to eliminate [special-interest money] altogether") combined with an obvious, ham-handed political ambition (to assume the mantle of the mighty McCain).

So far, Gore's plan has not attracted much attention, but the proposal deserves a lot more of it—and the Bush campaign should provide it. The plan represents the first big-government excess from national Democrats since Hillary Clinton's doomed

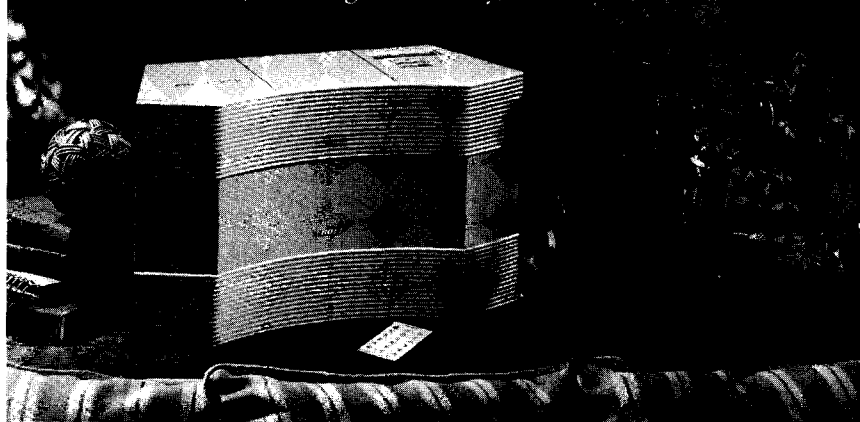
health-care plan of 1993–94. What Hillary wanted to do to health care, Gore wants to do to the election system: socialize it. This is a "risky" (to use a favorite Gore word) departure from the successful Dick Morris strategy of eschewing proposals that smack of the old liberalism in favor of modest increases in government and small, symbolic gestures aimed at the middle class.

Gore clearly thinks the ground has been prepared for him by John McCain. He is playing Wilson to McCain's TR, teasing out the full-blown liberalism implicit in McCain's inchoate progressivism. Indeed, the Arizona senator's only criticism of Gore's plan is that the vice president isn't sincere enough about it, which ultimately is neither here nor there. The key thing about Gore's idea is the worldview it reveals. The traditional liberal command-and-control vision has simply been transferred from the economic realm to the electoral.

Gore promises to pass the McCain-Feingold bill—eliminating "soft money," squeezing independent groups—as just a "first step." He would follow it up by pressuring the Federal Communications Commission to "issue a ruling" requiring broadcasters to give free airtime to candidates. Stations would be forced to do something unprecedented: provide time to each major-party candidate in a race equal to whatever time is actually bought by independent groups for political ads.

There are two notable things about this initiative. First, it would create pressure on broadcasters simply not to accept independent ads, since it would make no economic sense (they would be forced to give away twice as much time as they sell).

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The plan would therefore be a backdoor way to limit—or “crack down on,” as Gore puts it—*independent expenditures*, the spending by advocacy groups that has been protected again and again by the courts as an essential exercise of First Amendment freedoms.

Second, the vice president isn't even pretending that he would try to pass any new laws to effect this: It would be an extension of the regulatory state by bureaucratic fiat. This is nothing new, especially in the area of campaign-finance law, which has been marked by the constant efforts of the Federal Election Commission to expand its reach with ever-broader interpretations of the law, predictably smacked down by the courts. (For Gore, a selling point of McCain-Feingold is that it would “increase the resources and strengthen the investigative powers” of the FEC.) Gore's approach is poetically appropriate, since it would rely on an undemocratic process as a means toward the end of making the American political process less democratic.

In this, Gore is in keeping with a powerful trend in liberalism, which has become increasingly dependent on corruptions of process to achieve its goals. Liberalism has long relied on the courts to legislate its desired ends, but now lawsuits have become even blunter quasi-legislative tools. They make it possible to enact policy changes—most recently, new gun and tobacco rules—without passing them through democratic bodies, which are perilously subject to the lobbying of citizens and pressure groups—including those that might, inconveniently, oppose the changes in question. Gore's plan can be viewed as the next step in this liberal march, directly curtailing the democratic pressure groups that before had merely been avoided.

Gore proposes a “nonpartisan Democracy Endowment” that would raise more than \$7 billion in tax-deductible contributions over seven years. These funds would be doled out to Senate and House candidates who agree to accept no other contributions. The endowment would help sever candidates from their parties—those raucously democratic, broad-based institutions—and insulate them from all other pressure groups. As Gore explains it, “The views of the donor will have absolutely no influence on the views of the recipient.” If, say, you are the conservative Club for Growth, hoping to revive the cause of tax-cutting by funding like-minded candidates, you are out of business under the Gore plan.

Gore's proposal is, in effect, an expression of a “nonpartisan” politics perfect for a new regulatory democracy. Insofar as it shelters the political process from organized pressures from below, the Gore system would increase the importance of the general climate of opinion created by elites in the press and in Washington (incumbent politicians, regulators, judges). This is one reason that right-to-life groups, deeply unpopular with the political class, are so fervently opposed to new campaign restrictions; if their freedom to protest outside clinics can be curtailed and RICO laws designed for gangsters used against them, what mischief might they expect from rules *explicitly* limiting their speech?

So, pro-life groups now talk a lot about the First Amendment. There are, of course, clashing interpretations of the amendment. Liberals tend to consider it a guarantee of personal expression, as the Constitution's nude-dancing clause; the amendment is

crucial to the project of personal, and especially sexual, liberation. But, properly viewed, the First Amendment is first and foremost meant to protect political speech; it has an indispensable place in the architecture of limited, representative government. As the *District of Columbia Circuit Court* has written: “If popular elections form the essence of republican government, free discourse and political activity form the prerequisite for popular elections. As Madison wrote, a government which is ‘elective, limited, and responsible’ to the people requires ‘a greater freedom of animadversion’ than one not so structured.”

The conceit of Gore and like-minded campaign reformers is that “freedom of animadversion” can be limited without affecting the “elective, limited, and responsible” nature of government. But the two are connected. That politicians are subject—and presumably responsive—to the clamorings of the great unwashed is what makes them elected officials and not federal commissioners or regulators. Gore's plan would change the fiber and tone of the American system, characterized by competing interest and pressure groups. Indeed, it runs directly

counter to the Supreme Court's admonition in *Buckley v. Valeo* that “it is not government, but the people—individually as citizens and candidates and collectively as associations and political committees—who must retain control over the quantity and range of debate on public issues.”

His proposal, in short, embodies big-government, regulatory liberalism and should be vulnerable to exactly the sort of populist assault that thwarted ClintonCare. To launch it, Bush would have to 1) shed his caution and make a big stink about a plan that otherwise might go unnoticed; 2) attack the plan not just in terms of Gore's character—the vice president will say anything to win, etc.—but in the more telling terms of philosophy. Such a Bush counteroffensive is unlikely. But if he under-

took one, he would make better use of McCain's appeal than Gore did in proposing his plan in the first place.

The reform sentiment that propelled John McCain was essentially anti-Washington. Bush can tap into it by criticizing the vice president for wanting to hand control of congressional elections to an unelected commission deep inside the Beltway. McCain also proved that there's a hankering in the country for a patriotism redolent of the heroes of American history, including the Founders. A clash of visions over campaign finance—between a regulated democracy policed by federal commissioners and a vigorous one enlivened by free and active citizens—would be an opportunity for Bush to talk about the country's core principles.

Gore says that Bush is aligned with the “status quo,” a charge that should be accurate in one sense. Bush should want to reform Washington out of a desire to preserve the constitutional order: from overweening federal judges, from powerful special interests like the trial lawyers who unilaterally force major social changes, and from Al Gore—all of whom want to lessen the opportunity for democratic decision-making and action. Fred Wertheimer might like the Gore plan, but James Madison sure as hell wouldn't. And perhaps Bush himself should take note: Madison didn't hesitate to oppose his age's industrial-strength version of McCain-Feingold—the Alien and Sedition Acts.

NR



By Roman Genn

Strangulation by Regulation

How it happened; what to do

PETER VANDOREN

Is America really "the land of the free," as Francis Scott Key put it? It's true that Americans (excepting many college students) can say and write almost anything, anywhere, and at any time with impunity. It's also true that Americans can practice and express their religious beliefs (or lack thereof) pretty much as they wish.

But markets are another story. A prescient Mr. Key would have written "the land of the free and the home of regulated markets." The hand of the regulator lies heavy on the land, shaping what is offered and paid in almost every market, from automobiles to utilities to fast food. Thinking of a market that is untouched by regulation is a lot harder than hitting the high note in "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Why are America's markets so heavily regulated? Regulation usually rides in the Trojan horse of "market failure"—the perception that a particular market does not (or will not) operate

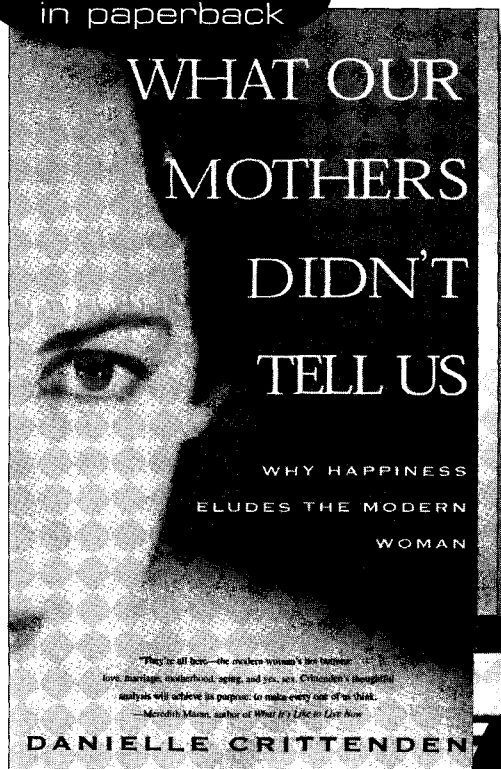
efficiently without government intervention. Yet regulation persists in spite of evidence that it does not enhance efficiency. Why? Like most political acts, regulation is really about redistribution.

What can be done to quell the redistributive urge that drives government intervention in markets? Would it be enough to replace offending officeholders with right-thinking ones? Perhaps their time in office should be limited so that they cannot become beholden to narrow interests. Or perhaps they can be sheltered from hard decisions by establishing independent commissions to deal with politically sensitive economic issues, as in closing military bases.

Truth is, none of those actions would remedy the interventionist urge, which derives its legitimacy from views commonly held by elite opinion makers and the voting public—namely, that when constituents want government to intervene in markets, elected officials should grant their request. Thus, the long-term remedy for interventionism is education. The better everyone understands how markets work, and how regulation harms the nation as a whole even though regulation may help those who advocate it, the less likely it is that the public—and public officials—will embrace regulation as the answer to every perceived market failure.

Mr. VanDoren is the editor of *Regulation*, a journal published by the Cato Institute.

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MARKET FAILURE: THE EXCUSE FOR REGULATION

An efficient market benefits everyone who chooses to transact business in it. The seller covers his costs (including a profit sufficient to keep him in business). The buyers willingly part with money for goods or services that they value at least as much as the other goods or services they could have bought with the same money.

Under what conditions do markets fail to produce efficient outcomes, and how do regulators presume to make them efficient? One form of so-called market failure arises when property rights are not defined or the cost of defending them is high. For example, a firm can pour industrial waste into a river, without paying a fee to do so, because no one owns the river. Similarly, automobile exhaust may be emitted into the air without charge because no one owns the air. Thus, environmental regulation ostensibly forces polluters to make the payments they would have to make if someone owned the water and air into which they dump their wastes.

Then there's the fear that markets won't provide crucial information. How can depositors monitor whether banks invest in high-quality loans? How can investors obtain information about the corporations in which they invest? How can consumers know whether life-insurance companies can pay future claims? What foods are safe? Which workplace practices are hazardous?

Getting answers to such questions is presumed to be difficult. And firms that attempt to fill the information gap may not be able to collect fees from everyone who uses the information. (Once information has been sold, the seller has no practical means of controlling its dissemination.) Thus, government tries to compensate for imperfect information by regulating banks, securities exchanges, insurance companies, the professions, working conditions, and food products—to give only a few examples.

Finally, there are the "monopolies," firms that face insufficient competition either because the relevant market isn't big enough to support two firms or because the firms have engaged in collusive behavior. The absence of competition allows monopolies to maximize profits by pricing their products above cost and restricting output. Ostensibly, that is why governments regulate railroads, trucking companies, telecommunications firms, pipeline companies, and electric, water, and gas utilities.

FOLLOW THE MONEY

Forty years of scholarly research shows that markets have been regulated unnecessarily, if not cynically. Regulation usually benefits a privileged group (often the regulated), makes everyone else worse off than they would have been without regulation, or does both.

Airline regulation, for example, restricted entry into the airline business, which led to higher fares. Similarly, the regulation of petroleum production by the Texas Railroad Commission reduced petroleum supplies, which made petroleum products more costly than they would have been.

There are more insidious examples of regulation. The 1927 Radio Act, for example, gave the federal government authority over the electromagnetic spectrum (EMS). Why? Purportedly, the signals of stations would interfere with one another if the government didn't manage the EMS. But recent scholarship points to a quid pro quo: Politicians gained some degree of con-

trol over a medium that influenced political outcomes; incumbent broadcasters received handsome profits because government control of the EMS restricted entry into broadcasting.

Supposedly, banks are regulated and bank deposits are insured to correct defects in the market for information about the quality of banks' investments. But, again, recent scholarship indicates that the threat of runs on banks induces banks to make sounder investments. And healthy banks can form private associations to insure one another against runs that are motivated by fear, not facts. Even in the Depression, most banks closed by runs were insolvent and should have been closed. Instead of making banks sounder, regulation (especially restrictions on branch banking) and deposit insurance simply allowed smaller (and usually weaker) banks to survive against their larger and more efficient competitors.

Surely, it is argued, regulation is necessary to ensure the health and safety of workers and the wholesomeness of food products. But research has found that workers recognize risks when they see them; thus, employers must pay higher wages to attract workers who are willing to accept greater risks. And the burgeoning organic-foods industry testifies to the power of market forces to yield safer and healthier products, for which those who desire such attributes are willing to pay.

Of course, market solutions to perceived health and safety problems do not satisfy those who dream of living in a zero-risk world. They demand that the rest of us pay for their dream through higher taxes, higher prices, and fewer jobs.

The same mentality underlies environmental regulation: All environmental benefits are infinitely valuable and must be secured at any price; pollution of any sort is infinitely bad and must be eliminated at any price. Such rhetoric makes for good political theater and poor public policy. Congress cannot even discuss the notion of acceptable levels of pollution. Instead it passes vague laws that proclaim zero tolerance for pollution and delegates the hard choices to the Environmental Protection Agency.

As with airline, banking, and telecommunication regulations, the rhetoric surrounding environmental regulations obscures their protectionist effects. Environmental regulations often give existing firms a competitive advantage by setting higher standards for new facilities, forcing prospective competitors to invest in expensive antipollution technology in order to compete with established companies. If legislators and regulators were interested only in pollution control, they wouldn't favor old polluters over new ones.

What about so-called natural monopolies? Some of the delivery infrastructure of electrical, telecommunications, railroad, and pipeline systems may have economies of scale that make competition less than perfect, but not impossible. (Recently, for example, even the People's Republic of Montgomery County, Maryland, adjoining Washington, granted a franchise to a second cable company to compete with the incumbent—an impossibility if cable really were a natural monopoly.) In fact, many scholars have concluded that natural-monopoly regulation came about because incumbents demanded regulation to create market stability—there was "too much" competition—and accepted rate regulation as the quid pro quo. It is not clear that consumers have benefited from this. Some scholars have concluded that regulated prices differ little from the prices that profit-maximizing monopolists would charge in the absence of regulation.

What Should We Tell Our Kids About Drugs, AIDS and Needle Exchange?

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THE FACTS ON NEEDLE EXCHANGE

- According to Donna Shalala, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, "A meticulous scientific review has now proven that needle exchange programs can reduce the transmission of HIV and save lives without losing ground in the battle against illegal drugs."

Source: Shalala, D.E., Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, Press release from Department of Health and Human Services, (1998, April 20).

- "To date, nearly 40% of the 652,000 cases of AIDS reported in the United States have been linked to injection drug use. And more than 75% of babies diagnosed with HIV / AIDS were infected as a direct or indirect result of injection drug use by a parent."

Source: Press release from Department of Health and Human Services, (1998, April 20).

- In 1996, 63% of the 375 new AIDS cases reported among children under age 13 were injection-related.

Source: Based on the number of new AIDS cases among children under age 13 for which the exposure group was known. Centers for Disease Control, HIV / AIDS Surveillance Report, (Year-end edition), Vol. 8, No. 2.

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THE ENEMY IS US

So much for the rhetoric of regulation. The reality, again, is that regulation—like most political acts—is for the purpose of redistribution. Politicians are entrepreneurs who supply redistribution in return for votes and organizational resources that aid their campaigns.

But blaming regulation on politicians is like blaming addiction on drug dealers. Suppliers don't supply unless there is demand. Where does the demand for redistribution come from? From most Americans. (Libertarians are the exception that proves the rule.)

To be sure, public-opinion polls find that a majority of Americans oppose governmental programs that directly redistribute income. (Here it helps to believe the fiction that there is a Social Security trust fund.) Nevertheless, Americans also demand government intervention in particular markets at particular times for particular reasons, often because those markets directly affect their incomes or lives. Being principled in their opposition to government intervention, many of those same Americans also oppose government intervention on behalf of other Americans.

Examples are plentiful. Auto dealers, in order to protect their investment from Internet competition, have lobbied their state legislatures to strengthen laws that prevent consumers from purchasing cars from anyone other than dealers. Those same dealers, of course, oppose environmental and work-safety regulations as infringements on their property rights. Farmers want the unrestricted right to export their products to other countries—a good pro-market position—but they also want government restrictions on output so that they can sell their products for higher prices. Those who already own homes in desirable neighborhoods vociferously support zoning restrictions to keep others from building homes in those same neighborhoods, which not coincidentally adds to the resale value of existing homes.

Thus, most constituents at one time or another ask politicians for economic favors, often in the guise of beneficial regulations. Legislators will grant those favors as long as they gain more electoral support from the recipients of those favors than they lose from those who pay for them in the form of higher taxes, higher prices, and less freedom. How long can this last? Not indefinitely. But it will go on as long as favors for specific constituencies and interest groups do not create costs for the general public that are intolerable.

WHY HAS THERE BEEN SOME DEREGULATION?

If economic favoritism is politically rational, what explains episodes of deregulation? Sometimes, deregulation comes about when firms in a regulated market become less profitable as economic substitutes arise. The regulated firms then demand deregulation—so that they can compete—or else regulation of the substitutes. For example, in the 1920s railroads demanded the regulation of trucking, to stem the flow of business from railroads to trucking. But the regulation of trucking failed to stem the decline of railroads, and by the 1970s railroads were near bankruptcy and calling for deregulation.

There is a noteworthy recent example of regulated firms' seeking—and getting—the regulation of other firms. Under the terms of the 1998 tobacco settlement, the big four tobacco companies are to pay the states \$206 billion over 25 years, as

“reimbursement” for smoking-related Medicaid costs claimed by the states. The 19 smaller companies don't have to make payments—unless their market share increases because they offer lower prices. If the small companies' right to compete on the basis of price had not been limited, the government-organized tobacco cartel would have collapsed, and the states would have faced a prolonged battle in court over claims that are demonstrably unfounded. Tobacco will be regulated as long as three conditions persist: there is no good substitute for it, it generates great profits for the large companies, and smokers are a despised minority of voters.

On the other hand, a politician who is willing and able to exert leadership can beat down economic favoritism, at least temporarily. A classic example is found in the reform of the tax code in 1986. Sen. Robert Packwood—who had presidential ambitions—locked the doors of the bill-markup session and eliminated an astonishing number of tax deductions and credits in return for lower marginal rates across the board. Since then, of course, we have reverted to normal politics: All kinds of privileges, exemptions, and loopholes have found their way back into the tax code.

Are there no lasting antidotes to the politics of economic favoritism? I will consider three: electoral reform, process reform, and education.

IS THERE HOPE IN ELECTORAL REFORM?

Would it help to elect more pro-free-market politicians to Congress? Not unless they were elected in overwhelming numbers because of a sea change in voters' attitudes toward economic favoritism. At the margin, however, if a particular member of Congress disdains regulation or other economic favors that would benefit his congressional district or state, *that* district or state will not receive new economic favors, but its citizens will nevertheless pay higher taxes and prices for the favors bestowed on other districts and states. Any member of Congress who wants to be reelected (oddly enough, most do) soon will realize that a principled stand against economic favoritism will cost him the votes and financial support necessary for reelection. A legislator who promised to vote against economic favors and then did so could not count on reelection unless his constituents could be bound to a pledge to reelect him if he stuck to his promise.

What about electing legislators who promise to limit their time in office and therefore their need to garner electoral support through economic favoritism? Sadly, that wouldn't change the result. Those legislators who develop a taste for reelection would find that they must deliver economic favors to ensure their reelection. Those legislators who fail to deliver economic favors would be thrown out of office—like it or not—by constituents who resent paying for everyone else's economic favors but receiving none of their own.

What if term limits were imposed constitutionally? That would not eliminate the underlying problem of constituent self-interest. Instead of renominating the usual suspects, party organizations would seek—and find—candidates who would strive faithfully to deliver economic favors, if elected. Voters would then redevelop the strong allegiances to parties that they had in the days when New England was a Republican redoubt and the South was solidly Democratic. Would that be progress?

IS PROCESS REFORM THE ANSWER?

Members of Congress *do* know that economic favoritism is a prisoner's dilemma that can be eliminated only by institutions that prevent legislators from granting constituents their requests for favors. And when the stakes have been high enough, members of Congress have been able to cooperate in an effort to revoke economic favors. One example—often held out as a model—is the Base Realignment and Closure process.

Congress delegated to a base-closure commission the politically difficult task of identifying military facilities that could be closed at little risk to military preparedness. The apparent success of this process depended on two ingenious provisions of the authorizing statute. First, the commission's lists of facilities to be closed had to be accepted or rejected *in toto* by the administration and Congress. In other words, the bad medicine had to be swallowed whole or not swallowed at all—in public view. Second, Congress could reject a list only if Congress passed a resolution of disapproval within 45 days after receiving the list from the administration. Because each list affected only a small minority of congressional districts and states, Congress never rejected a list.

If that sounds too good to be true, it is. The base-closure process is not a model that can be applied to many (or even a few) congressional deliberations. In fact, it may have been one of a kind. There have been other so-called independent commissions, but Congress has never given any of them the power that it gave the base-closure commission. Under most circumstances, Congress will not cede such power, because to do so would eliminate the stuff of congressional life: logrolling.

Furthermore, the base-closure process worked only as long as all parties to the deal recognized the necessity of base closings and didn't meddle in the process. The deal fell apart after 1995 because base closures proposed for Texas and California threatened President Clinton's ability to carry those states in the 1996 election. Although Clinton approved the 1995 base-closure list and sent it to Congress, which let it take effect, he then invented ways to circumvent the closings in California and Texas. Not surprisingly, Congress has since refused to reauthorize the process.

If economic favoritism can't be averted, perhaps Congress could at least find a less costly way of distributing largesse to its intended beneficiaries. For instance, instead of regulating markets, why not give sacks of money to the politically favored—but let economists design the giveaway schemes?

It has been tried. The Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 ended the market-distorting system of price supports and acreage controls that had augmented farmers' incomes for 60 years. The act replaced price supports and acreage controls with direct subsidies, to be distributed on a fixed, seven-year schedule. Farmers would get their money, but market forces would decide how much food was produced and at what price.

Farmers were happy with the new program in 1996 and 1997 because their new subsidies were greater than the price-support payments they would have received under the old system. But when farm prices plummeted in 1998, Congress reneged on the payment schedule and gave farmers about \$6 billion more—further proof, if any were needed, that Congress cannot make long-term commitments to stay out of taxpayers' wallets.

The good news, in this case, is that Congress gave farmers their extra \$6 billion as a lump-sum payment rather than revive price

supports. And the visibility of direct subsidies makes it likely that there will be a good debate in 2002, when the subsidies come up for renewal.

The bad news, of course, is that Congress has cooperated only to the extent of finding a more efficient way of delivering an economic favor. Instead of regulating agricultural output and prices, Congress simply hands money to farmers. But given political realities, this may be the best we can get.

A final process reform favored by many in the policy-analysis business is the creation of an independent agency staffed by economists that would issue reports about the costs and benefits of economic regulation. Such analysis, currently performed mostly by think tanks and academics, might have more clout if it were an official, independent part of the political process.

As a policy analyst myself, I am sympathetic to the argument; but if we look to history for evidence in support of an official role for policy analysis, honesty demands reduced expectations. Robert McNamara, Alain C. Enthoven, and the other "whiz kids" of the early 1960s institutionalized the role of economic analysis in the Defense Department as a clever way to say "no" to the demands of the services. But it was effective only so long as it had presidential support. The Systems Analysis Office was never more powerful than when it was run by Enthoven in the 1960s. When Richard Nixon became president and installed Melvin Laird as secretary of defense, the balance of power in program selection shifted from the whiz kids to the services. Never again would analysts dominate the services. Iconoclastic analysis of the sort provided by the whiz kids is effective only if the party in power wants it to be effective.

EDUCATION: THE ONLY HOPE?

The education of future policymakers may lead to more rational regulation, if not less regulation. The legal profession supplies the judges who interpret laws and regulations, as well as a healthy fraction of legislators, regulators, and their staffs. As a result of the rise of the law-and-economics movement at the University of Chicago, the tenured faculties of all elite law schools now include card-carrying economists. One cannot graduate from a top law school without having been exposed to lessons in how markets work, how fragile their efficiency characteristics are, and how efforts to regulate them often have perverse results.

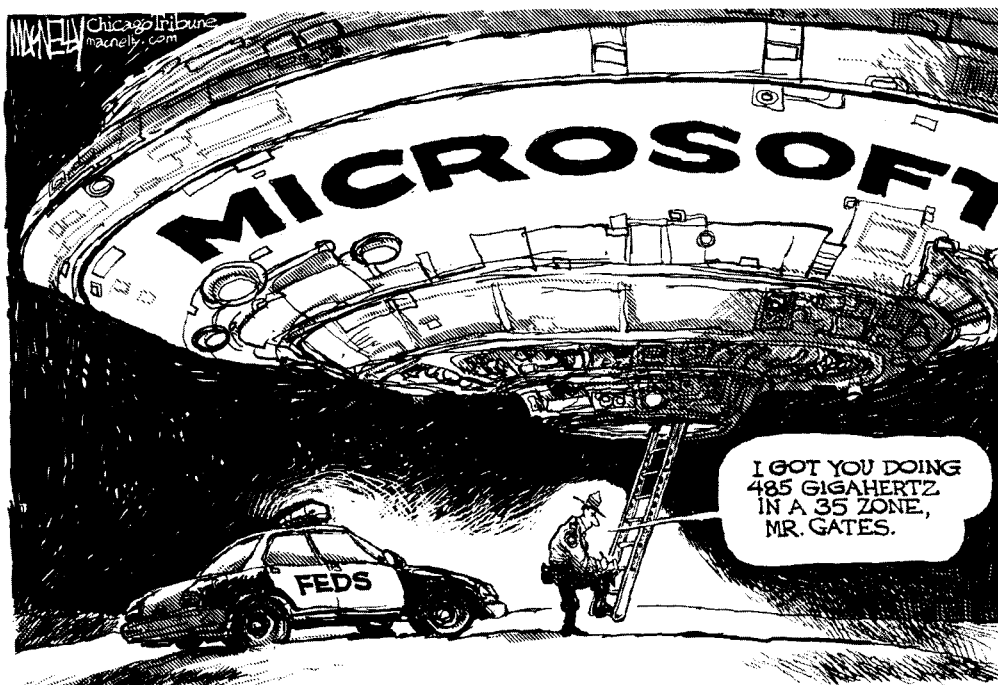
But the last, best hope for deregulation rests with future generations of voters. Voters get the legislators and laws they demand. It is easy for voters to demand regulation—or to acquiesce in it—because most voters do not understand its negative effects. Today's students, of course, are tomorrow's voters. The more that students are exposed to the truth about the benefits of free markets and the costs of regulation, the less likely it is that they will vote for politicians who favor regulation.

Yes, the task of such an educational effort is the daunting one of taking citizens back to a view of the proper role of the state that was not popular for most of the 20th century. Many believe that the movie cannot run backwards. We have no choice, however, but to try. Exposure to economics, particularly in high school, is now totally inadequate and should be expanded. If a majority of citizens believes that it is okay to demand economic favors from the government, politicians will accommodate those demands. And no institutional magic bullets will stop them.

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BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

A Pocket Wilson

JAY NORDLINGER

Woodrow Wilson, by Louis Auchincloss
(Viking, 128 pp., \$19.95)

It is a great life, one of the greatest American lives, and biographers have been addicted to it for about five generations now. Woodrow Wilson himself never had a chance to write his autobiography; illness cheated him out of what surely would have been a masterwork. Everyone else, however, has had his crack. There have been “standard” biographies, reverential, quasi-religious biographies, attack biographies, medical biographies, Marxian tracts, and one strangely moving and insightful book by one president about another: Herbert Hoover’s *The Ordeal of Woodrow Wilson* (1958).

Now there is a short life of Wilson, one in the new Viking/Penguin series of such lives, by Louis Auchincloss, one of the most prolific writers of our time. Auchincloss has produced about 60 books of nearly every type, including biographies of Edith Wharton and Richelieu. There is nothing left for him to do, it seems, except come out with a cookbook or bird-watching manual. Auchincloss was born in 1917, the year in which Wilson took the United States into world war. He not only understands Wilson, he feels him and his times, acutely.

Our 28th president—Thomas Woodrow Wilson, called Tommy until adulthood—was born in 1856, the son of a distinguished Presbyterian minister. Auchincloss provides a neat summation of his school years, as he does of everything else. To call Wilson a star of a student would be to put it mildly. He excelled in everything, showing a verbal



The president on his tragic campaign through the West, September 1919

facility that left all around him slack-jawed. Even as a teenager, he had little doubt that he was destined—meant by God—to have a great and beneficent impact on the world. By his late 20s, he was a well-known professor of government, who wrote prolifically for the common reader; but he could never shake his larger longings. In 1884, he wrote to his wife, Ellen, “I want to be near the world; I want to know the world, to retain all my sympathies with it—even with its crudenesses. I am afraid of being a mere student.”

His fears went unrealized. In 1902, he was named president of Princeton University, an advance that increased his fame and influence. In typical Wilson fashion, he caused a stir on campus, inveighing and acting against what he perceived as the university’s social snobbery and disdain for democracy.

From his perch at Princeton, Wilson won a large following, including men who wanted to make him president—of the country. In 1910, some of those men arranged for Wilson to have the Democratic nomination for governor of New Jersey. Thus he rose on the wings of

bossism; once in office, he opposed and undermined that very bossism, making him the darling of reformers and idealists everywhere. He was an unusual blend of conservative and liberal, a cherisher of Burke and a determined antielitist, with a touch of the populist. In 1912, he breezed to the Democratic presidential nomination. In a four-way race—the great contest featuring Wilson, President Taft, ex-president Theodore Roosevelt, and the Socialist Eugene Debs—he won.

Wilson’s rise, therefore, was one of the most rapid and startling in our history. But as Wilson himself argued, his entire life had been a preparation for this ascension. And he thought of himself—modestly or not—as the embodiment of the national spirit and creed, a true heir of the Founders, continuing their work and adapting it to present challenges. Others—millions of them—thought of him that way, too.

Auchincloss handles Wilson’s two, pivotal terms with concision and grace. The events fly by, but are somehow not slighted or trivialized: the Mexican war, the creation of the Federal Reserve system, and so on. Auchincloss can cut to the heart of a matter in seconds, writing elegantly and wisely. His book, as befits its form, has an epigrammatic feel. He does a nice job of canvassing opinion about Wilson—everyone had one, and a strong one—but he never fails to weigh in himself. The cast of characters is large and vibrant. Particularly important are two men forever linked to Wilson, one friend, one foe: Colonel Edward House, the president’s confidant and adviser (on whose memoirs Auchincloss relies heavily), and Theodore Roosevelt, who carped at Wilson constantly and vitriolically.

The book never loses its sense of the grandeur and pathos of Wilson’s life. When Ellen Wilson dies in 1914, we can

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hardly bear it, because neither can Wilson. Shortly after her death, Wilson wrote, "I do not see the light yet; but it is not necessary for me to see it: I know that it shines, and I know *where* it shines." Shortly after *that*, he met a Washington widow, Edith Bolling Galt, whom he married with what struck many as unseemly haste. TR, for one, sneered, "My wife is dead; long live my wife." (Auchincloss duly notes that Roosevelt himself had entered into a second marriage.)

Within this slender book is a correspondingly brief history of World War I—and an effective little summary it is.

■

Auchincloss's thesis is that there were 'two Wilsons': the one noble, grand, and heroic; the other narrow, intolerant, and destructively willful.

■

Auchincloss gives us the shock and hell of that war in only a few pages. Best of all, he writes with a respect for historical time, not indulging in arrogant, misleading hindsight. We get a clear picture of why and how Wilson labored for so long to keep neutral, even as the war hawks swooped down on him. Roosevelt likened Wilson to the Levite who passed the needy man on the Jericho road. Henry Cabot Lodge, who would be Wilson's chief nemesis in the Senate, was one of many who accused him of being pro-German (because of his academic training, Lodge suggested). Wilson held fire, though, and in 1916 campaigned on the later-mocked slogan "He kept us out of war." But then came the Zimmerman telegram, further submarine attacks, and other fateful events, and in April 1917, Wilson asked Congress for war.

No multilateralist was the war-making Wilson—not in the present sense. As Auchincloss reminds us, "Wilson made it very clear that the United States was an associate rather than an ally and would retain its independence in organizing its war effort and even in the deployment of its armed forces." When victory came, Wilson left the United States—the first president to do so while

in office—in order to secure the peace personally. He faced disaster in Europe and would face disaster at home, particularly at the hands of the proudly obstructionist Lodge. Though space in this volume is precious, Auchincloss devotes an entire chapter to the senator, and rightly so. And pat as the observation may seem, Auchincloss is probably correct that Wilson and Lodge brought out the worst in each other.

Out near Wichita, in September 1919, as he campaigned for acceptance of the Treaty and League, Wilson suffered his terrible collapse. Then came the slow, sad demise (chronicled poignantly in Gene Smith's 1964 book *When the Cheering Stopped*). Wilson was succeeded by Warren G. Harding. It has been noted many times: On Inauguration Day, 1921, Wilson was gaunt and sepulchral, Harding hale and robust. Who would have guessed that the former would outlive the latter? Wilson died in 1924, a half-year after Harding, and was interred in the National Cathedral, the only president, still, to be laid to rest in the capital city.

To his latest volume, Auchincloss brings the experience, learning, and reflection of a lifetime. He uses "I" and "me," but always unobtrusively and helpfully. He refers to present-day events (such as President Clinton's impeachment), but never jarringly. He comments usefully on such battered concepts as "isolationist," "internationalist," and "self-determination." He is plainly admiring of Wilson, but alert to his faults, and prone to tweaking him. And he is always prompt with the superbly chosen detail—as when Wilson, out of office, alone with Edith in their house on S Street, pens letters of encouragement to Franklin Roosevelt, his former assistant secretary of the navy, stricken with polio.

If Auchincloss has a thesis—and he does have one, of sorts—it is that there were "two Wilsons": the one noble, grand, and heroic; the other narrow, intolerant, and destructively (and self-destructively) willful. But they were always the same Wilson, two, not necessarily unrelated sides of one, fairly complicated man. He was not, as Auchincloss recognizes, the cartoon that both his idolizers and his demonizers have long liked to draw. He believed in right

and wrong, yes—his Christianity made it so—and he was given to absolutism; but he was also a politician, whose successes were at least as dazzling as his failures.

It may well be impossible to write a dull biography of Wilson, whose life was hugely dramatic and whose abilities were something like Olympian. For one thing, all you have to do is quote the man. Moreover, this is perhaps the right time for a fresh and honest look at Wilson. Interpretation of the First World War tends to be sloppy and flip now. And during Kosovo days, the word "Wilsonian" was subjected to pitiful abuse; it bears increasingly little resemblance to the man who gave it birth. There will, of course, be more biographies of Wilson—and more. Writers will always want to recount and analyze—to exalt and curse—this life. And they will never be short of readers. NR

Pilate's Truth

ANDREW SULLIVAN

Pontius Pilate, by Ann Wroe (Random House, 352 pp., \$25)

WATCHING Pope John Paul II transcendently navigate the Holy Land brings to mind the extraordinarily ordinary story of Pontius Pilate. Not so much the milieu but the incomprehension of so many in the face of so many others, the difficulty of even transparent symbolism in so charged and riven a place. One of the great merits of Ann Wroe's evocation of Pilate's life and afterlife is her appreciation of this gulf of comprehension. Here are passionate Jews misunderstanding inarticulate Romans. Here too are medieval English actors making merry with ancient Hebrew customs. Here are 19th-century theologians in solitary study of the swift, emotional currents in a 1st-century

Mr. Sullivan, the author of *Love Undetectable*, writes for the *New York Times*, *The New Republic*, and the *Sunday Times* of London.

Jerusalem mob. And here is an editor of *The Economist* grappling with timeless questions of truth and faith and destiny.

Does she pull it off? Amazingly, she does. Perhaps because of the impossibly large gaps in understanding between ourselves and Pilate, whoever he was, Wroe has written a vivid book. Her approach is rather like modern science's method of determining the shape of a molecule. She bounces myriad, minuscule rays of light off her tiny, barely visible subject, and by the angle of that light's rebound, she slowly limns a shape. We see Pilate at the end of this book as a shadow cast by many light beams—one,

of course, far more powerful than any of the others. And, like so many before us, we identify with him, warm to him, sympathize with his impetuosity, boredom, and terrible luck.

Still, we hardly know anything about him, as Wroe concedes. He was a minor governor of a minor province, Judea, during a period of relative calm. Fragments of archaeological evidence testify to his existence, but his bureaucratic records remain lost. Wroe posits a provincial and military beginning—"Pilatus" means "skilled with the javelin"—followed by an insecure posting abroad. We know the name of his

wife but virtually nothing else about her. We don't know Pilate's childhood name. But his very ordinariness in some ways gives Wroe a more plausible opportunity

■

**Pilate seems even now
a practical, almost English
bureaucrat, embroiled in
events way over his head.**

■

to recreate the atmosphere of the Roman army as a way of bringing Pilate to life, to convey the kind of upbringing Pilate almost certainly had, to detail what most men in his position would have spent their days doing, from their morning shaves to their siestas and elaborate social duties.

So we can imagine what Pilate actually did in the hours after he condemned Jesus to death:

By about two-thirty or three, he would have concluded the business of the day and made for the baths. This was the essential winding down, the proper ablution. Perhaps he still felt in need of it. He could let them scrape him, pummel him, bruise him as he lay on the slab; naked too, human too, with only a towel around his shoulders. Then he could slip into the soothing water. Perhaps he plowed ferociously up and down, still feeling his humiliation or his anger; or perhaps he merely lay in the water, watching his limbs float, letting his thoughts drift away. And when he eventually emerged, faintly fragile and glowing, his hair slicked down, it was to find that the sky was dark.

Is this legit? Perhaps, to use one of Wroe's verbal crutches, perhaps. She knows the limits of her narrative, but only rarely does she stray too far from possible reality. There are occasional lapses of overwriting. We don't need to imagine Pilate "writing like a medieval clerk, eyes wide and head to one side, while outside the window hung stars with faces on the flat backcloth of the sky." But some of her imaginative digressions are oddly successful. She evokes what we know about British imperial life to convey a sense of the Roman version. She describes a group of contemporary

(Continued on page 57)

■ SHELF LIFE ■

THE Easter season brings its customary flood of religious books. The most compulsively readable is a paperback reissue of *The Next Pope* (Harper-San Francisco, 198 pp., \$13) by the late Peter Hebblethwaite, with important new material by his widow Margaret. This is an up-to-the-minute attempt to handicap the next papal election; the most valuable section offers thumbnail sketches of all the candidates.

While the book is extremely entertaining, its liberal bias is so blatant as to be hilarious. One candidate, Vietnamese archbishop Nguyen Van Thuan, is described as having a style that "could not be more different from [John Paul II's]—shy, modest, gentle, introverted, reluctant to criticize." The implication that John Paul II is a papal version of Stanley Kowalski adequately sums up the book's slant.

Surprising for its general lack of liberal posturing is *Joan of Arc* (Viking, 180 pp., \$19.95) by novelist Mary Gordon. While Gordon pays the required tribute to Joan as medieval gender-bender, she is sensitive to the issues of Catholic religion and Gallic nationalism that make Joan a more complex figure. Gordon modestly calls her book merely a "study" and a "biographical meditation"; but it's a true biography, and just the right length for a heroine who didn't live to see her 20th birthday.

Karen Armstrong's *The Battle for God* (Knopf, 442 pp., \$27.50) recounts the

parallel histories of Christian, Jewish, and Islamic fundamentalisms over the past 500 years. Fundamentalism, the author notes, is inspired by a "lust for certainty" in an age of turbulence; further, it "rarely arises as a battle with an external enemy [but rather] as an internal struggle in which traditionalists fight their own coreligionists who, they believe, are making too many concessions to the secular world." Armstrong points, a little too conveniently, to fears and neuroses as the chief wellsprings of fundamentalist thought and practice; but she tells an interesting story.

What of Easter itself, and its protagonist? Robin Griffith-Jones's *The Four Witnesses: The Rebel, the Rabbi, the Chronicler, and the Mystic* (Harper-San Francisco, 405 pp., \$25) discusses the Four Gospels—not trying to harmonize them, but respecting each approach on its own terms. The author's neologistic translations take some getting used to—e.g., "What is up between you and me, Jesus of Nazareth?" (Mark 1:24)—but occasionally offer great insight. For example, the father desperate to have Jesus cure his son blurts out, "Lord, I do trust, help my distrust, please!" (Mark 9:24). "Distrust" is surely closer to emotional reality than the traditional rendering, "unbelief."

Griffith-Jones performs a valuable service in encouraging readers to return to four of the greatest "biographical meditations" ever written.

—MICHAEL POTEMRA

JOIN WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR., LEADING CONSERVATIVES, & THE EDITORS OF NATIONAL REVIEW AS WE DISCUSS POLITICS, ENJOY THE SUN, SAND, AND STARS, AND CELEBRATE OUR 45TH ANNIVERSARY ON THE

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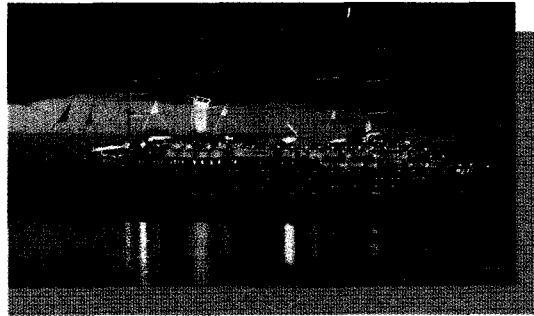
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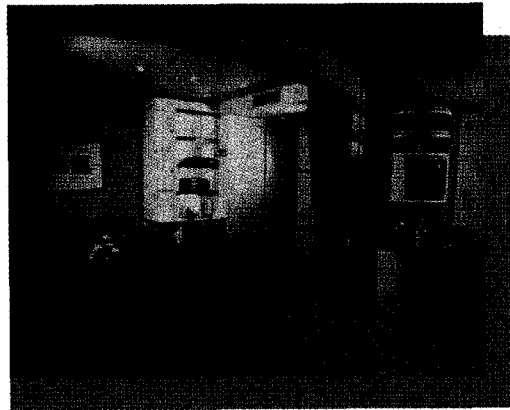
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BARBADOS, BARBADOS. This infectiously happy island, with beautiful beaches and balmy weather, has a delightful British flair. As a result of its successful sugar economy in the 17th and 19th centuries, you'll find large manor estates full of fine Barbados mahogany and antiques, along with gaily painted wooden-frame houses—the essence of the festive Caribbean. Rum rules in Barbados, and, over the centuries, cane plantations have divided the landscape into a pretty patchwork of fields, coconut and royal palms, breadfruit, oleander, and citrus trees. (P.S.: We'll be offering pre- and post-cruise options at the famous Sam Lord's Castle!)

ILES DES SAINTES, LESSER ANTILLES. Pastoral and far off the beaten track, the Saintes are a cluster of eight islands off the southern coast of Guadeloupe. In Bourg, the charming hamlet on Terre-de-Haut, the largest island, you can wander peaceful streets past small houses, then follow the narrow road out of town through fields and hills to a sweeping strand of secluded beaches.

NEVIS, LEeward Islands. Nevis is an almost-perfect volcanic cone rising up from the sea and covered with bougainvillea, hibiscus, and many other lush tropical plants. For a time we'll be

anchoring outside of Charlestown, the island's capital, for those who wish to go ashore on tours or on their own, then repositioning to a nearby idyllic beach for an afternoon of watersports, sunning, and a festive beach barbecue prepared by the ship's crew.

PIGEON ISLAND, St. LUCIA, Windward Islands. The twin towers of the Pitons, two volcanic peaks rising to more than 2,400 feet, mark St. Lucia, an island of lush green valleys, acres of banana plantations, and bubbling sulfur springs. Some 24 miles of vibrant reef make St. Lucia a haven for

divers and snorkelers. Pigeon Island National Park, a 40-acre island connected to the mainland by a causeway, was once a pirates' hideaway. Today, impressive ruins of old English forts, archaeological relics of Arawak Indians, and splendid beaches make this a fascinating place to explore.

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Exciting, Exclusive Itinerary

DATE	DAY	PORT/TIMES	EXCLUSIVE NR EVENTS
Dec. 10	Sunday	Bridgetown, Barbados	Midnight departure
Dec. 11	Monday	At Sea	Seminars, Morning & Afternoon Cocktail Reception (pre-dinner)
Dec. 12	Tuesday	Nevis, 8AM-5PM	Late-night smoker (post-dinner)
Dec. 13	Wednesday	St Martin, 8AM-1AM	Seminar, Morning
Dec. 14	Thursday	St Barthelemy, 8AM-5PM	Seminar, Morning
Dec. 15	Friday	Iles des Saintes, 8AM-5PM	Seminar, Afternoon Late-night smoker (post-dinner)
Dec. 16	Saturday	Pigeon Island, St. Lucia, 7AM-4PM	Seminar, Afternoon Cocktail Reception (pre-dinner)
Dec. 17	Sunday	Bridgetown, Barbados, 6AM arrival	

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Mail to: National Review Cruise, The Cruise Authority, 1307 Powers Ferry Rd., Marietta, GA 30067-5409 or Fax to 770-916-1425

Please fill out application completely and mail with deposit check or fax with credit-card information. One application per cabin. If you want more than one cabin, make copies of this application. For questions call The Cruise Authority at 800-326-4971.

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Names #3 & #4 (if taking others in your cabin)	
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Prior to July 11, 2000	\$75 per person
July 11 to September 11, 2000	\$750 per person
After September 11, 2000	100% of cruise

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(All rates are per person, double occupancy. Single rates available upon request. Air/Sea rates include roundtrip air and transfers from select gateways, all port charges and taxes, all gratuities, meals, entertainment, and National Review activities. Cruise-only rates include all of above except airfare. Failure to appear for embarkation for any reason constitutes a cancellation subject to full penalties. Personal items not included.)

BE SURE TO CHECK ALL APPLICABLE BOXES FOR YOUR CRUISE!

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Choice of Cabin Category: ☐ Suite (limited!) ☐ Deluxe Cabin
Bedding: Beds made up as ☐ Twin ☐ Queen
Booking Single?: Do you want us to try to match you with a roommate?
☐ Yes (your age) ☐ No

II. AIR/TRANSFER PACKAGES

☐ I/we will provide our own roundtrip air to Barbados (see below).
☐ Book my air from (see list below).

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

Citizenship: Is everyone a U.S. citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If No, indicate citizenship

Special Information (medical conditions, celebrating anniversary, etc.)

IMPORTANT

Everyone cruising will be required to bring either a valid passport OR a certified birth certificate (with raised seal), plus photo ID. Failure to do so may result in being denied boarding of the WindSurf. Children do not require photo ID.

CONDITIONS FOR PASSAGE: H2O, Ltd. d/b/a The Cruise Authority or National Review, Inc., its owners, agents or employees accept no responsibility whatsoever for illness, accident, death, dismemberment, weather, strikes, acts of God, or the accessibility, appearance, actions, or decisions of those individuals promoted for the cruise. Nor can the above-mentioned entities be held responsible for the actions of Holland America Line/Windstar Cruises, participating air carriers, or shoreside personnel or subcontractors. Return of this application indicates full understanding and acceptance of these conditions for passage.

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AIR TRAVEL TO BARBADOS: Due to the nature of the cruise, Windstar Cruises is unable to offer extensive airfare options. Please consider one of the following options for making air transportation to Barbados for the cruise. Please know that you **must** arrive in Bridgetown, Barbados, no later than 10:00PM on Sunday, December 10, 2000, in order to make the ship in time for sailing. Do **not** schedule a return flight before 9:00AM on Sunday, December 17, 2000 (this will allow you ample time to disembark the WindSurf, transfer, and go through customs). Complimentary roundtrip transfers to/from the airport will be provided, but you must forward your air schedule to The Cruise Authority no later than November 24, 2000. **OPTION 1:** Book your own air schedule, making certain to adhere to the times discussed above. This option gives you the greatest flexibility and control over your air schedule. **OPTION 2:** You may contact American Airlines and access a discount group fare which has been set up specifically for the National Review group. Call toll-free, 1-800-433-1790, and refer to **Star File #69DOUA**. Make your booking and pay for it as you normally would with any airline. **OPTION 3:** Book your air via Windstar Cruises from the "gateways" listed below. A forced overnight may be required either pre- or post-cruise, at your expense, and we have no control over when or if it will be required. Prices are per person, round trip, coach. Gateways with asterisk marks (**) traditionally require a forced overnight in Miami (\$132) or Barbados (\$195):

Atlanta	\$760	Detroit	\$1,010	Oklahoma City	\$940	San Francisco	\$980
Baltimore	\$850	Houston	\$910	Orlando	\$760	Seattle**	\$1,060
Boston	\$740	Kansas City	\$930	Philadelphia	\$750	St. Louis	\$1,060
Chicago	\$860	Los Angeles	\$930	Phoenix**	\$1,070	Tampa	\$760
Cincinnati	\$990	Miami	\$660	Pittsburgh	\$900	Tucson	\$1,060
Cleveland	\$920	Minneapolis	\$1,070	Portland**	\$1,070	Washington, DC	
Dallas	\$900	New Orleans	\$800	Salt Lake City**	\$1,050	(DCA or IAD)	\$780
Denver	\$980	New York	\$830	San Diego**	\$1,040		

(Continued from page 52)

pro-life demonstrators to bring to life the reality of religious zeal in a secular world. She brilliantly mines scenes from Castro's Havana to conjure up the sense of Jerusalem as a police state. You can quibble with such literary tactics, but if you're going to write a book on Pilate, and have it longer than three pages, they're probably your only option. And her very English concentration on the

■
**We are both able
to see Pilate's side, and yet
also see that, in the last
resort, it is not enough.**
■

concrete details of Roman and Jewish life is perfect for her subject. Isn't that why we are still fascinated by Pilate after all? Because he seems even now a practical, almost English bureaucrat embroiled in events way over his head. The darkness he saw that afternoon was not merely an eclipse—such an event on the likeliest Friday in A.D. 33 was recorded in several Mediterranean countries—it was the still turning point of all of human existence. And yet Pilate, having dealt with other tedious matters that day, was busy taking a bath.

The only extraordinary thing about Pilate was his climactic, single conversation with Jesus, as relayed in John's Gospel. Wroe convincingly argues that "no man wishing to write propaganda would produce a piece of dialogue like this," and her account brings it to life more vividly than most Passion narratives on Good Friday. The interchange is a series of non sequiturs, opaque generalities, and witticisms that might also be taken as metaphysical profundities. Like Pilate himself, it is banal yet it is also unforgettable. "So you are a king then?" Pilate finally splutters, fastening on the only conceivably relevant statement Jesus has so far made. "You said it," comes the irritating response. Then a pause, which Jesus surprisingly breaks. "This is what I was born for, and this is why I came into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." "What is truth?" Pilate asks, and then, with the most

famous question in history left hanging in the air, moves on. The conversation is over. Only the saints know the answer Jesus was formulating to the sight of Pilate's scurrying back.

Wroe points out that the Greek given by John shows that the word Jesus used for truth, *i aletheia*, was different from Pilate's *aletheia*. The truth was pitted against mere truth; eternity against the moment; abstract against concrete. And in that missing *i* we have the spiritual essence of the exchange. Pilate is not demonstrably dismissive. His questions are relevant and fair. He acknowledges Jesus' innocence of the charges, yet the politics of the moment bars him from acting on it. So he sanctions the murder of Christ. There is truth and there is truth. It all depends on what the meaning of *i* is.

Our sympathies are with Pilate because he is the voice of sane politics in this. He was not some Roman Solomon, and he was not above it all. He had been brutal in earlier confrontations with his Jewish subjects and sensibly wanted to avoid another explosion. He was probably unmoved by the exchange. For all the imagination of later hagiographers, there is no hard evidence that Pilate was a later convert, or pondered much in later years on the impact of this one, apparently routine decision. But we sympathize with him because he was doing his best to wield power effectively, and because in that exacting and often brutal process, the innocent sometimes suffer. Questions of ultimate truth do not seem to count for much when there is an unruly mob outside your window, a merciless emperor breathing down your neck, and a hundred other chores before lunchtime.

The genius of John's account is that we are both able to see Pilate's side, and yet also see that, in the last resort, it is not enough. Sometimes, the truth matters; and calls us; and demands our decision. And we do not exactly renounce the right path. We merely duck. "Pilate's [final] remark," Wroe writes in one of her best passages, "was not just the symbolic statement of a man who could not see God before his face; it was the statement of a man who has had an intimation of the truth but is too afraid, or too self-preserving, to go on."

That is us, isn't it?

NR

The Last Socialist

RONALD RADOSH

The Other American: The Life of Michael Harrington, by Maurice Isserman (Public Affairs, 449 pp., \$28.50)

INTRODUCING Michael Harrington on *Firing Line*, William F. Buckley Jr. once quipped that being a socialist in America is akin to being the tallest skyscraper in Kansas. If so, then Harrington was like the World Trade Center. A warm, engaging, brilliant advocate of socialism—whom Buckley described shortly before his death in 1989 as a "brave and admirable man"—Harrington was a worthy successor to Eugene V. Debs and Norman Thomas as the last of America's socialist leaders. Now Maurice Isserman, one of the major historians of the American Left, has produced a sympathetic yet critical account of how this product of traditional Catholic education moved to adopt a very American form of Marxism.

Born Edward Michael Harrington in 1928 to a Democratic, Irish-Catholic family, Harrington dropped his father's first name and became known simply as "Mike." His mother enrolled him in a Jesuit institution, seeking in part to give him the social network he would need "to make his mark in St. Louis society." Much to his parents' dismay, Harrington moved in quite another direction. But he would credit his Jesuit education with giving him habits of discipline and study, as well as a set of assumptions antipathetic to those of a capitalist social order.

Harrington did not start out a socialist. During his college years at Holy

Mr. Radosh is senior research associate at the Center for Communitarian Policy Studies at George Washington University. He was a member of Michael Harrington's DSOC and DSA groups in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Cross, he declared himself a Taft Republican, a flirtation that Isserman links with the disaffection of many Catholic voters with a liberalism "out of touch with their social concerns." Harrington's strongest formative influence was probably theologian John A. Ryan, who argued that natural law demanded a living wage for workers and the right to unionize. In this light it is fascinating to read Harrington's student-paper editorial, "For the Radicals," espousing what would later be a conservative viewpoint—arguing against divorce, birth control, and crass materialism.

Harrington tried Yale Law School, but abandoned a promising legal career for the bohemian life of a writer in New York's Greenwich Village. It was at Yale that Harrington moved from Republican conservatism to disenchantment with the capitalist system, and also lost religious certainty. Harrington decided that a just God could not send an individual to hell for all eternity; yet he retained a love for Catholic ceremony, ritual, and commitment, and did not immediately leave the Church.

When Harrington moved to New York to stay in 1951, he sought out Dorothy Day and her Catholic Worker movement, explaining later that it was "as far Left as you could go within the Church." There he became a legend as the movement's house intellectual and as someone who could take defiant political stands, such as opposition to the Korean War. It was also there, in a movement that sought to serve the urban poor, that Harrington first wrote about the persistence of poverty in America.

Harrington did the work of the movement by day, and spent his nights at the White Horse Tavern drinking with other intellectuals, radicals, bohemians, poets, and artists, including Dylan Thomas, who died one night when Harrington was there. He was already becoming frustrated with the *Catholic Worker*, which eschewed building a mass political working-class movement. That led him to the writings of Karl Marx and a small group of anti-Stalinist Marxists whom he had met on various picket lines—followers of a renegade Trotskyist named

Max Shachtman. Harrington severed his ties with the Church as well, and joined the ranks of a small, largely irrelevant and highly combative Marxist sect.

Harrington managed to appear to transcend the sectarian squabbles of the Left, while persuading many others who would never be socialists of the need to address the inequities of American society. He became the public face of "democratic socialism," which others

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**Society, Harrington wrote
 in *The Other America*,
 had to help the poor 'before
 they can help themselves.'**
 ■

described as a left-wing variant of traditional social democracy. At times he would soft-pedal his socialism in order to reach average Americans with his critique of the capitalist system.

The Other America, published in 1962, was the book that made Harrington famous. Harrington argued that despite the view of America as an "affluent society," there was another America in which some 50 million people lived in an economic underworld. These "invisible poor" were steeped in a culture of poverty that only a massive nationwide effort could address. Society, Harrington wrote, had to help the poor "before they can help themselves." Not only did the book acquaint the nation with its underclass, it also gave Harrington a new public persona. After the book was given wide publicity in a *New Yorker* essay by Dwight Macdonald, it came to the attention of John F. Kennedy and became "required reading" among those shaping the administration's domestic policies. Harrington thus found himself regularly in Washington, D.C., where he became part of the new Johnson administration's task force on poverty.

Ironically, Harrington had joined the socialist movement precisely when sociologist Daniel Bell was sounding its death knell. Harrington believed that

socialism could yet become a mass movement in the United States. But the "movement" he joined was really a small faction engaged in the kind of petty squabbling that has always discouraged potential adherents to socialism. While Harrington appeared to be above these sectarian squabbles, he was in fact fully immersed in them, and often directed their strategies and tactics, which his lieutenants carried out. At the same time, after writing *The Other America*, he was able to create the image of a thinker both "modest, reasonable, and calm" and "idealistic, impassioned, and inspiring." He had become the heir to Norman Thomas, America's most revered and responsible radical.

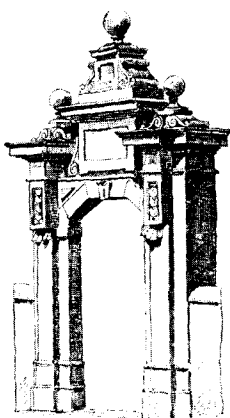
Unlike its Marxist predecessors, Harrington's sect tried to function as a left-wing conscience within a broader liberal movement for social change. In the early 1960s, Harrington responded favorably to the stirrings of student activism and echoed the positions of the nascent New Left. In many ways, the radical founders of Students for a Democratic Society were Harrington's wayward children. But since Harrington viewed himself as a spokesman for the socialist movement and its traditions, conflict was inevitable.

The first crisis occurred over Communism. Harrington attended the gathering in 1962 at which Tom Hayden and others wrote the "Port Huron Statement." As confirmed anti-Communists, Harrington and his Shachtmanite comrades opposed the delegates' decision to allow a young Communist to attend the meeting as an observer. The SDS crowd, on the contrary, viewed anti-Communism as part of a reactionary American foreign policy. To them the Soviet Union was a benign conservative power, not a totalitarian empire that threatened world peace and American security.

Isserman thinks Harrington was wrong to wage this fight; others would note that within a few years, SDS fell apart as its cadre moved towards domestic terrorism, Maoism, and different variants of pro-Communist Leninism.

Nevertheless, Harrington apologized for years about his actions at Port Huron as he courted the New Left and swore that he would never do anything like that again.

Harrington split with the Shacht-



manites over the war in Vietnam—he favored unilateral withdrawal—forming the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, which later merged with the anti-anti-Communist New American Movement to create a new umbrella organization called Democratic Socialists of America.

Said Harrington, “I had finally expiated my stupidity in SDS.” But his decision also turned him from the path he had followed for decades—trying to create a social-democratic majority based on an alliance of organized labor, the new middle class, and the emerging civil-rights movement.

Harrington’s support for George McGovern in 1972 significantly helped the leftward tilt of the Democratic party. Ironically, notes Isserman, Nixon won the support of most Catholics and unionized blue-collar workers, many of them registered Democrats. Rather than standing with this working-class majority, Harrington was more concerned with keeping the support of radicals like the young Hendrik Hertzberg, who wrote him that by supporting the Vietnam War the Socialist party

had “misplaced its soul.”

For the rest of his life, Harrington’s fight would be with those who started out in the socialist ranks and moved towards conservatism. He defended liberal social programs when many were beginning to question their underpinnings. As the Reagan era dawned, he was unprepared and forlorn as the nation moved in a direction he never thought possible. He marched for a “nuclear freeze,” praised the spread of socialism in Europe and Latin America, gave crucial support to the Sandinistas and to Jesse Jackson’s 1988 presidential bid. Yet as Isserman writes, it “was hard to avoid the implication that both he and the movement he represented may well have outlived their time.”

With Harrington’s passing, the socialist tradition in America came to an end. There is much to admire in his life—his personal courage, his commitment to social justice, and his lifelong devotion to creating a democratic-socialist movement in the nation in which it was least possible. In Maurice Isserman, he has a biographer who does justice to his life’s work.

NR

Higher Ignorance

DAMON LINKER

The Law of Peoples, by John Rawls
(Harvard, 199 pp., \$22.50)

WHY should it matter to Americans that John Rawls has written a book about international relations? After all, *The Law of Peoples*—like Rawls’s two previous books, *A Theory of Justice* (1971) and *Political Liberalism* (1993)—is written in the arid prose favored by analytic philosophers and thus contributes nothing to the literary edification of its readers. Moreover, unlike many useful textbooks on the subject, Rawls’s book sheds little light on the history of ideas related to foreign policy. As for the depth of philosophical thought contained in the book, suffice it to say that Rawls, like too many moral-

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ists, is more concerned with telling us how the world ought to be than understanding how it is.

What, then, is to be gained from an encounter with Rawls's latest work? Above all, a glimpse into the contemporary liberal soul. For since the publication of *A Theory of Justice* Rawls has become the unofficial philosophical spokesman for academic liberalism. Richard Rorty might sell more books with his "pragmatic" defense of democratic egalitarianism. Ronald Dworkin

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Rawls's philosophy exists to tell liberals that, regardless of the way the world is, it ought to be exactly the way they already believe it ought to be.

■

might do more to publicize the liberal agenda with his high-profile essays for *The New York Review of Books*. But no one distills the deepest longings of liberals and transforms them into philosophical principles and proclamations like Rawls.

Surely some of the considerable reverence shown to Rawls in the academic community can be traced to the timing of the publication of his first work. *A Theory of Justice* appeared just as George McGovern's presidential campaign was taking shape, and the book seemed to confer philosophical legitimacy on the hopes that motivated his supporters on university campuses across the country. In over 500 densely argued pages, Rawls claimed that politics had to be conceived in fundamentally moral terms, that morality was synonymous with justice, and that justice could be equated with "fairness." As if drawing a simple inference from an enormous syllogism, Rawls concluded that politics should seek to diminish the unfairness of life—the unfairness that, for instance, leads one person to be born with advantages and opportunities that others lack. Practically speaking, this meant that liberal politics not only had

to recognize individual rights to life, liberty, and property, but also to provide a generous welfare state, universal access to health care, and even (as Rawls advocates in his more recent writings) public financing of political campaigns.

McGovern's crusade proved a dismal failure at the ballot box, and liberals over the next two decades have had to resign themselves to playing an increasingly peripheral role in American politics. But Rawls convinced them that they had justice itself on their side, and this righteous self-certainty has proven enough to keep their hopes alive through the conservatism of the Reagan '80s and the unprincipled opportunism of the Clinton era.

How did Rawls ground his philosophical defense of liberal convictions? He did so by insisting that liberalism consists primarily in "being reasonable," and that reasonableness is achieved when each individual imagines himself in a pre-political "original position" in which a "veil of ignorance" hides knowledge of the goods (like wealth, talent, and status) he possesses in life. Knowing that he might very well turn out to be poor, uneducated, and the victim of circumstances beyond his control, every individual chooses to authorize a government that provides precisely those protections and benefits advocated by the most liberal wing of the Democratic party.

Now this way of arguing is notoriously circular. Rawls might have feigned disinterestedness, but it was clear to all but the most blinded partisans on the left that his thought experiment was designed to lead his readers to precisely the conclusion he had in mind from the outset. After all, no one would choose to base politics on the arbitrary assumptions of the original position unless he was already convinced that individuals ought to bracket knowledge of the goods they possess in life when making political judgments. The precondition of liberal reasonableness is, it seems, liberal reasonableness.

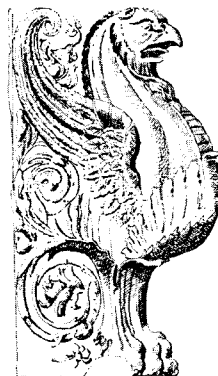
But to judge Rawls's work by the same standards that one would apply to the great philosophers of the Western tradition is largely to miss the point. For

Rawls's philosophy exists not to lead us to timeless human truths. Rather, it exists to tell liberals that, regardless of the way the world is, it ought to be exactly the way they already believe it ought to be.

This highly politicized, sub-philosophical intention is the only thing that can explain and excuse *The Law of Peoples*, Rawls's grand attempt to apply his domestic political theory to the international arena. Every philosopher from Plato through Hegel recognized that the relation between states presents peculiar difficulties for morality, since states do not share common habits and customs as do citizens within particular countries. This is why many so-called "realists" have concluded that states are in a perpetual Hobbesian condition of war with each other. But Rawls is unconcerned with such considerations. Refusing to refer to "states" on the grounds that states have their own selfish interests that must be overcome, he chooses instead to speak of "Peoples," which, he claims, have a moral potential analogous to individual human beings. Rawls then simply applies to the world at large the same thought experiment that supposedly generated Democratic domestic-policy proposals in *A Theory of Justice*.

The result is as follows. The world is divided into two groups. First, there are liberal and non-liberal "decent" Peoples, who, imagining themselves behind the veil of ignorance in the original position, decide that they should live with the other Peoples of the world in peace and mutual respect. Then there are the non-decent Peoples of the world, some of whom behave nastily due to no fault of their own (because of poverty, accidents of history, and other misfortunes) and others ("outlaw states") who do so because their leadership is simply corrupt (in Rawls's theory, "Peoples" never choose to act indecently).

On the basis of these distinctions, Rawls claims that liberal and non-liberal decent Peoples ought never to engage in power politics when dealing with their enemies. To do so is to fail to serve as an example for would-be mem-



Mr. Linker is a visiting professor of political science at Brigham Young University.

bers of a future world-wide "Society of Peoples." Instead, liberal and decent Peoples ought to act as if such a Society existed in the present; they should thus wage wars only for defensive purposes and with utmost restraint. Likewise, they must recognize their "duty" to offer assistance to Peoples in distress.

If his readers had any doubt that his moral imperatives for foreign policy are little more than arbitrary expressions of left-liberal sentimentality, it becomes painfully obvious as soon as he begins to apply those imperatives to reality. To no one's surprise, Hitler is held up as the personification of evil, while Stalin is passed over in silence. Truman is denied the title of "statesman" because of the bombing of Hiroshima, but his resolution in standing up to Communist tyranny after World War II is never mentioned. Neither are the decidedly un-Rawlsian policies of Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Reagan—policies that contributed so decisively to wrecking the experiment in inhumanity conducted by the "outlaw state" that was the Soviet Union. These silences and admonitions cannot but lead us to conclude that, for Rawls, reason and justice demanded adopting anti-anticommunism during the Cold War.

This hyper-liberal vision of international relations is what Rawls dubs, with much fanfare, a "realistic utopia." But it would be more accurate to call it a proposal for self-induced lethargy and impotence on the part of the world's democracies. Though the paradox might disturb the slumber induced by Rawlsian rationalizations, the effectual truth of things is that domestic decency must often be defended with vigilance abroad, and aggression by foreign powers matched by measures we would never tolerate within our own borders. If liberal sympathy and softness are counterproductive when dealing with criminals and the poor at home, they are downright suicidal when applied to the relations between states.

Of course, most adults recognize this as an obvious, if slightly unpalatable, fact of political life. But Rawls appears not to. Thus it is that liberalism's quest for moral purity has led its leading philosopher into a condition of child-like innocence about the ways of the world.

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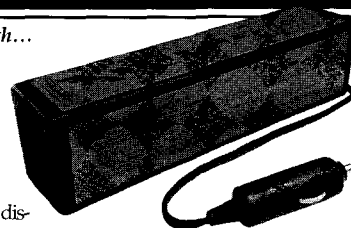
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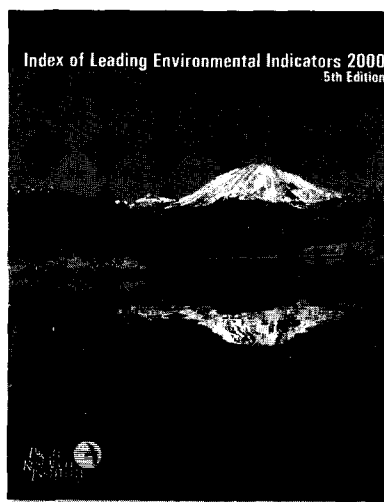
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■ CITY DESK ■

Den of Ubiquity

RICHARD BROOKHISER

NOW and again you see or hear a phrase so perfect it inscribes itself on your heart. This is my latest, from a local magazine: "Those everywhere-at-once Ronson twins, Charlotte and Samantha . . ."

I don't know who those Ronson twins are, and I did not wish to spoil the beauty of the description by finding out. Probably heiresses or publicists, or maybe both. It doesn't matter; I can't get them out of my head; I have been turning over the journalist's phrase in some pocket of my mind like a lucky silver dollar.

By describing those Ronson twins as "everywhere-at-once," the author did not mean that, like Spinoza's God, they filled the universe. He simply attributed to them ubiquity—a presence in every situation. Paradoxically, it is easier to be everywhere-at-once in a big city than in a small town. People who try to be everywhere-at-once in small towns are regarded as busybodies or know-it-alls, and engender resentment. In a multi-million mass of people, those who are everywhere must be spread so thin that their ubiquity is not oppressive. Contemplating everywhere-at-once-ness

is one of the pleasures of New York life.

Ideas can have ubiquity, as well as persons. Sometimes it's easy to figure out how ideas disperse themselves. Sick jokes, which blossom in the smoldering track of every embarrassment or catastrophe, are pollinated by stock traders. Joke-telling, like trading, is a male thing; sick-joke-telling, doubly so. It is like putting caterpillars in the hair of girls. As I age, and know more ailing people, I find myself less amused by sick jokes and therefore hear them less often; but the next time Monica gains weight or a celebrity dies, the current will flow through my ears.

Fashion news is spread, mostly, by the fashion industry. Now it is everywhere-at-once that gray is the new black. Black is the basic New York color. As the absence of color, it is exclusive; since there are no shades of it, it is frictionless. So black is—and has been, for hundreds of years: see all those Velázquez paintings of Spanish kings—the passport to style and sleekness. But the fashion industry is momentarily black-sated; hence the vogue of gray. I asked my wife if she had actually noticed anybody wearing gray. She said, "Yes, me

and you, at this very moment." I looked, and saw that it was so.

One nice thing about gray, my wife added, is that it goes with black.

How other ideas become ubiquitous, however, is harder to figure out. For instance: Early is the new late. One of the reasons people used to come to New York was to be able to eat dinner late: to escape meat loaf with the family at 6:00. They wanted to eat when it was black out. Now (maybe because no one eats with families anymore), lateness is devalued. Very, very cool people—like those Ronson twins—crowd happening places during the early evening news. Your grandparents from Nebraska will feel right at home (if they also happen to like Asian fusion cuisine). Like black, late will be back; it is the natural state of the city. But early is now an acceptable variation.

Back to those Ronson twins. They, and other ubiquitous people, are not, literally, everywhere. One place they are not is with me as I write (in this, they are unlike the color gray). I have never met them. Yet they are now in my thoughts,

if only because I read that they were there already. Their ubiquity is still more concrete. Manhattan being the physically concentrated place it is, chances are that I might see them in transit somewhere (if I ever learn what they look like). If the Ronson twins appear in *People* magazine, then someone in International Falls, Minnesota, can think of them, like any New Yorker; but unless the *People* reader comes here, there is no chance their paths will cross. Magazine readers are like philosophers adoring the forms; New Yorkers are like Catholics and Hindus, who sometimes see their saints in the flesh.

Every city, obsessed with an activity, breeds ubiquitous figures. In Hollywood, they are the stars, and Heidi Fleiss. In Washington, they are the pundits and

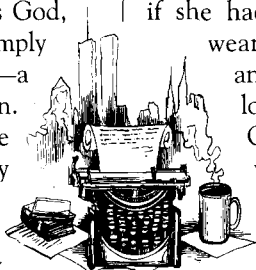
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**Contemplating
everywhere-at-once-ness
is one of the pleasures
of New York life.**
■

the Wise Men (Clark Clifford was everywhere, until it turned out that one of the places he was was B.C.C.I.). In New York, there are many activities, many Ronsons.

The payoff to us is that, by knowing of them, we gain vicarious ubiquity. When someone asks us, "Did you hear what Donald/Henry/Jennifer gave to Melania / said about Taiwan / did with Puff Daddy?" and we know the answer, then they, we, and the everywhere-at-once object of our attentions are, for a moment, everywhere together.

Like any stimulant, ubiquity can become addicting. Those Ronson twins are a link in a Great Chain of Non-Being, that ends with Elvis and Princess Di. But let us take the benign view. Everybody is curious about other people. That's why we read Trollope novels and watch the Biography Channel. That's why people in small towns look out their windows at passersby. There, however, people know the passersby, intimately. In a city, we can pry without harm, gossip without vice. These people are only everywhere; it's not like we know them.

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■ FILM ■

Of Motley Yearnings

JOHN SIMON

OUT of Australia comes a delightful first feature, *Me Myself I*, by Pip Karmel. This is a comedy with serious (but not grave) undertones, a lesson in living that goes down easily (but should not be taken too lightly), a film by and about a woman that also speaks to men. It wears its wisdom playfully and concerns a hugely likable heroine into whom the writer-director has surely put some of herself.

Pamela Drury is a successful magazine journalist dissatisfied with her life. She is of an age at which her friends are married with families; she, however, doesn't even have a decent boyfriend. She comes across a photograph in her untidy apartment of the man who got away, Robert Dickson, the Mr. Right who married one of her acquaintances instead. As she works on one of her magazine pieces, she encounters Ben, a guidance counselor teaching a self-defense class. A sportswriter as well, he has admired some of Pamela's articles.

Interested in Ben, she is about to write to him, but then drives to his house on a rainy night, only to observe him through the window, happily cavorting with wife and kids, which gives her an even colder shower than the drenching rain. Pamela has various dreams and fantasies, and then something strange, yet seemingly real, happens. She is in Robert Dickson's house, where her former beau is married, not to her friend Janine, but to her own mirror image, her other self. Pamela Two (played by the same actress) longs for the free bachelorette life as much as Pamela One does for husband, home, and family. The two Pamelas agree to swap places.

As a married woman, Pamela One is still herself: a magazine writer with some of the same friends she had before. Yet everything is different, what with helping her punkish teenager Stacey through

menstruation, coping with preteen Douglas's brattiness, and having to toilet-train four-year-old Rupert. But there are compensations, such as rekindling Robert's sexual interest in her. A busy architect, he neglected his wife; now he is amorous again, and sex is great.

What happens thereafter is not wholly unpredictable, but handled with tact and finesse. Rachel Griffiths, so good as Hilary in *Hilary and Jackie*, thrives on a bigger and better part. No great beauty,

■
**With her first film,
 writer-director Pip Karmel
 earns a modest niche
 in film history.**
 ■

she is transfigured by her complete acting from hair to toes, her sensitivity and warmth, and what I can only call her soul. But her part—or parts—must also profit from Pip Karmel's expert writing and direction.

The film's every milieu is exemplarily captured by the production designer Murray Picknett and cinematographer Graeme Lind. Both Pamela One's charmingly messy pad and Pamela Two's insipidly cheery home are evoked in subtle particulars. David Roberts, who looks rather like Robert Graves, has just the right mixture of manliness and dormant gentleness as Dickson; as Ben, Sandy Winton is the paradigmatic athlete suffused with a fine sensibility. And the three child actors, ages 4 to 14, are annoyingly and endearingly true to life.

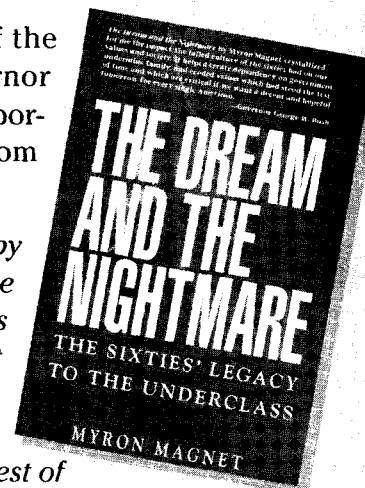
Me Myself I augurs auspiciously for Pip Karmel's career, but this firstling alone—alternatively frivolous and sage—earns her a modest niche in film history.

■ A lesser and flightier, but still heartening and lovable, movie is *Bossa Nova*, by the Brazilian director Bruno Barreto, who also put in ten years' work in this country. Notable among his films are *Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands*, *Four Days in September*, and the interesting failure *Carried Away*, one of whose

Understanding George W. Bush

On January 5, 2000, the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* asked Governor George Bush what was the most important book he'd ever read, aside from the Bible. Here's what Bush said:

"The Dream and the Nightmare by Myron Magnet crystallized for me the impact the failed culture of the Sixties had on our values and society. It helped create dependency on government, undermined family, and eroded values which had stood the test of time and which are critical if we want a decent and hopeful tomorrow for every single American."



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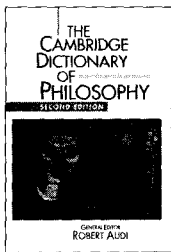
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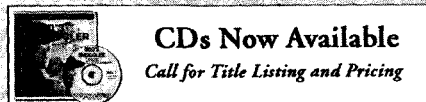
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leads, Amy Irving, Barreto married—which may be his best achievement. Irving is lovely and talented, and has always hovered on the verge of stardom, but has, perhaps luckily for her, never fallen into it. It is possible that even her best roles on screen and stage have not been rewarding enough; however that may be, viewers of *Bossa Nova* will find it hard to resist her.

Based on a popular novel, this is the story of Mary Ann Simpson, an American flight attendant and the widow of a Brazilian pilot. Now she makes a living

Black and White is almost completely improvised and a catalogue of James Toback's sleazy obsessions.

in Rio as an English teacher. She has not had a lover in the two years since her husband died, but around her swirl various love affairs and temptations. Two of her English students, the dashing soccer star Acácio, just sold to an English team, and the dapper, middle-aged lawyer, Pedro Paulo, whose wife, Tânia, left him for a tai chi instructor, are making a big play for Mary Ann. Among her students is also Nadine, who is conducting an Internet romance with a New York artist—or so she thinks. Then there is Sharon, a clever and ambitious law intern of Pedro Paulo's, who first captures the lawyer's younger brother, Roberto, then ditches him for Acácio.

And more, much more than I can begin to summarize. As imbroglia intertwines with imbroglia, funny misunderstandings proliferate. Some of them are sexual, some linguistic, caused by imperfect knowledge of English or Portuguese. As in any good crazy quilt, the pieces finally fall into place, though a couple of players inevitably end up losers. It is all a slightly ribald carnival, so appropriate to Rio, with the soundtrack awash in Antonio Carlos Jobim's sinuous bossa-nova melodies, easy on the ear.

Easy on the eye are the city- and oceanscapes of Rio, lushly shot by Pascal Rabaud. I wonder whether the bay's waters are as unpolluted as the random

night swims would suggest, or the streets are as safe for foreigners as the story implies. But never mind; the film is funny, sexy, romantic, and glamorous, like postcards from a fairy tale, but also sophisticated, with wry, bittersweet, and even cynical touches. Except for Irving and Stephen Tobolowsky, the cast is new to us, but the women are delightful, and the men macho or suave. Barreto has directed with brio and affection for his city and his wife, and neither of these lovelies disappoints.

■ The filmmaker James Toback is consumed by three passions: for sex with as many women as possible (several I know have been pursued by him); for violence, not least toward girls (the football star Jim Brown, with whom he lived while writing a worshipful book, once knocked the heads of two white girls together, an episode lovingly reproduced in a Toback movie); and for celebrity—his own, or that of others whom he sucks up to and sometimes inveigles into appearing in his trashy movies.

His latest, *Black and White*, is almost completely improvised and a catalogue of his sleazy obsessions, to which a young white's inane wish to be an unfettered ghetto black should be added. There are disjointed episodes, but no real story. Typically, Toback ran into Mike Tyson and persuaded him to report the next day to shoot scenes that must have been written overnight. I single out the affair of a black basketball star bribed to drop a game and his white anthropologist mistress, played with equal ineptitude by Allan Houston of the New York Knicks and the supermodel Claudia Schiffer.

Also the pitiful ménage of Brooke Shields in dreadlocks, as an amateurish documentarian trying to shoot a film about hip-hop, and Robert Downey Jr. as her homosexual (another Toback fascination) husband, trying to put the make on Tyson (who comes off best in the film). Here, too, are any number of known rappers and hip-hoppers, as well as the pretty but untalented Marla Maples and the untalented but successful Ben Stiller. No need to see this film, but catch it if you can its respectful reviews by Elvis Mitchell in the *New York Times* and David Denby in *The New Yorker* to understand how someone as phony as Toback makes it. **NR**

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Gstaad and the New Rich

GSTAAD, MARCH 17

THIS is my 40th "winter" (six weeks in Feb./March) in Gstaad, the twin purposes of coming here with my wife, back when it all began, being to work and to ski. *Mens sana in corpore sano* stuff. Providence has a way of disarranging people's pretty little life programs, in this case an early and severe accident which ended my wife's skiing life. But work and skiing for me went on year after year. The first book I undertook here in 1959 was *Up from Liberalism*. Just now I have completed a novel called *Elvis in the Morning*.

Now Gstaad is much written about in the society pages, its dominant scribe being Taki Theodoracopulos, a feisty, amusing, well-read cosmopolitan who dearly loves to inveigh against objectionable features of life, including the nouveaux riches. Taki clears the way for his philippics (regularly published in London's *Spectator*, the *New York Press*, and here and there) by reiterating his own weaknesses, among them a spell in a British prison for carrying cocaine while sashaying through customs in the London airport. He is the heir of a shipping fortune, whence his self-designation as "the poor little rich boy." He gambles to articulate excess and, if he is to be believed (which he is not), he is drunk every night. Cut that in half.

But for all the bluster, he is avidly read not only by socialites who peep into his columns and draw deep breaths of relief on the days they escape Taki's scrutiny, but also by others who are amused and instructed by him. He is a serious commentator with a high-alarm cant-detector system who treads dispositively on hypocrisy and exhibitionism.

He too has been in Gstaad many seasons and writes from time to time on the new rich, though he confesses the difficulty in defining exactly how one qualifies for the title. Taki correctly distinguishes between huge expense done for private pleasure and huge expense done to attract public notice. He is withering at the expense of the latter.

Consider, at Gstaad, the Eagle Ski Club. It used to be quite exclusive, in the sense that more people wished to get in than were wished in, allowing for a certain choosiness. But antiquated ski-lift

facilities reduced the patronage of the Eagle Club, and management maneuvered by raising the admissions fee, a form of recapitalization. The results are—as Taki might have predicted.

The habit at the Eagle Club is to post conspicuously a clipboard hanging on a surface which you necessarily run into climbing the stairs into the dining room. Members write their names and indicate the sum of money they authorize the Club to bill them as season's gratuities for the dining-room staff. A typical annual contribution, 40 years ago, would have been 100 Swiss francs. One club member, seeking notice, wrote out his name in bold letters and gave 300 francs. David Niven retaliated by writing, just under the public philanthropist's name, 500 francs and listing his name as: Anon. That was a high rebuke. Willing to be generous, not willing to advertise your generosity.

This year, because of straitened club-life, the typical gratuity listed has grown to SF 500 (U.S. \$300). But lo!—halfway down page one, a member comes in for SF 5,000! And, 15 names below, comes a *second* name, giving \$5,000. Now understand this: We are talking about a *lunch* club. These donors patronized it maybe ten times during the season. That's high tipping. Taki would call it the mark of a nouveau, which, as noted, has less to do with which progenitor accumulated the money than with civilized habits of distributing it.

Taki was schooled in America, is truculently pro-American, and is discreetly near to spendthrift-generous. After his encounter with the law, there was some throat clearing by management on the question of whether he should be readmitted to the Eagle Club. John Kenneth Galbraith, who has wintered in Gstaad most of his adult life and made it a prac-

tice to scorn the Eagle Club, nevertheless thought to intervene in the matter by writing a public letter to a director, noting that Taki's singular disadvantage over other members was that he had been caught in social malefactions, unlike the typical Eagle members. Taki returned.

Gstaad, meanwhile, goes along, a radiant Alpine sanctuary. The language is German, though almost everyone is a polyglot, and the sense of the place is that Swiss culture will make its way through historical vicissitudes with some self-confidence, a mature self-confidence, not the kind Taki speaks of when scorning the ways of the new rich.

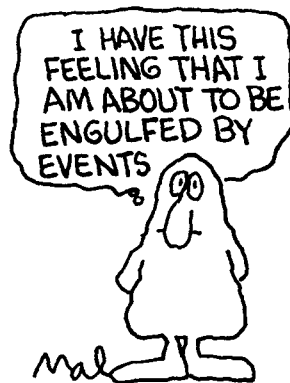
Cheering On the Survivors at the Oscars

NEW YORK, MARCH 27

NON-AMATEUR writers avoid industriously the word Orwellian, because even years ago it became an overused and underdefined cliché. But try to find another word for what Michael Caine came up with at the Oscar ceremony on Sunday after receiving a prize for *The Cider House Rules*. That's the movie that's a paean to the abortion industry. What the great actor said, when finally the thunderous ovation let him be heard, was, "I'm basically up here, guys, to represent you as what I hope you will all be, a survivor."

Well, George Orwell would have pondered that, all right, inasmuch as a survivor, in the context of the theme of that event, turns out to be somebody who was physically present at the Shrine Auditorium, i.e., somebody who survived the mother's temptation to abort the fetus. That makes them survivors, does it not? So they are being applauded for surviving the practices celebrated by the movie. That, ladies and gentlemen, is Orwellian.

Thirty-five hundred people in the audience, to judge from the applause, were all of them expressing their enthusiasm for what the author of the movie, John Irving, had said were the real heroes of the evening, Planned Parenthood and the National Abortion Rights Action League. Latecomers should know what *The Cider House Rules*



is about, namely the ordeals and deportment of its first central figure, the same Michael Caine, who is the doctor/headmaster of the orphanage he presides over.

The orphanage is peopled with attractive children between the ages of, roughly, five and twelve. The high moments in their lives are the visits of prospective adopting parents. Mr. and Mrs. Jones come in and look over the assortment of children, each one of whom hopes breathlessly that he/she will be chosen to have a home of his/her own. The Joneses decide on a particular boy (or girl) and drive off with their adopted offspring. During this period, one boy, who is not adopted by anyone, begins what amounts to an internship with the doctor/headmaster, acquiring such gynecological and obstetrical skills that, before you know it, he himself has conducted an abortion. This makes him the hero, because abortion is the hero of *The Cider House Rules*.

The people who crowded into the Shrine Auditorium are from a very choosy lot of people—producers, directors, actors, musicians, writers. They want a child, if they want one at all, when they want one, not merely because a child was conceived. Choosy parents can be, and indeed can be expected to be, loyal and affectionate, but their priorities are pretty much motivated by self-concern.

But the very-planned-parenthood idea isn't something that has taken hold only in the community of people who attended the ceremony. A few years ago, I debated James Carville in front of an audience of several thousand students at the University of Oklahoma, and lo! the one point he made that brought down the house was his insistence that a Democratic administration would more reliably protect the right to prevent births. These were 20-year-olds, who found so appealing the idea of guarding against an unwanted child.

In *The Cider House Rules* what one most cared about was that the children be wanted, that the touring couple should take as many as possible into their homes and give them love and protection, though it became hard to imagine they'd have more love and affection than Michael Caine gave them, never mind his gruff ways. Everyone in the audience who cheered was able to do so because that person's mother had elected *not* to extinguish life, but rather to nurture it. Every person applauding owed his/her life to the parent's determination to bring on a survivor of the abortion clinic.

That made for some artistic confusion, making heroes and heroines out of the people whose determination to have children, rather than abort them, comprised the jubilant audience and the millions of Americans who cheered on the movie that seemed to be celebrating a movement to reduce the audience, perhaps to the point where a generation or two down the line the Shrine Auditorium would be only half full, lucky survivors of otherwise categorically choosy parents.

Snoopchief 2000?

NEW YORK, MARCH 31

IT'S Census time, and the complaints are coming in. They tend to focus on invasion of privacy, and suspicion. There is a suspicion out there that the data being collected will somehow coalesce in unfriendly shapes and forms. A larger, more ominous internal-security agent perhaps. Maybe a hydroelectric dam astride what used to be your little dreamhouse. Maybe a new law that you can't eat clams off the beach. And so on.

The late William F. Rickenbacker, a former colleague and a bird of paradise, has a footnote in the history of anti-bureaucratic exertions for refusing in 1960 to complete the so-called blue form. It was sent to every fourth American (the ratio is now one in six), asking many more questions than those specifically authorized or even adumbrated in the Constitution. Article I, Section 2 requires every ten years an enumeration of the population for the purpose of fixing proportional representation.

The letter received by Mr. Rickenbacker, which serves as a prototype, read, "Household Questionnaire for the 1960 Census of Population and Housing." A box at the bottom of the page told him that "the Census is required by the United States Constitution and further authorized by 13 U.S.C. 5, 9, 141, 221-4." That is a truckful of authority, one has the impression, and indeed, we are told that "the law requires that the inquiries be answered completely and accurately, and guarantees that the information furnished will be accorded confidential treatment. The Census report cannot be used for purposes of taxation, investigation, or regulation."

The historic Rickenbacker case was triggered by an article he published in

NATIONAL REVIEW. In it he declared war against "Snoopydom." What business was it of the government of the United States to gather together more information than needed simply to answer the basic question: How many United States representatives are to be allocated to this part of the United States compared with that part? "The Census Bureau," he wrote, "is authorized to enumerate, not evaluate the population. Perhaps ten years from now, in the next Census, the Bureau will desire to tabulate other aspects of the citizenry. Perhaps by then we shall not consider it improper to be asked how much cash we have on hand and in checking accounts; where we do our banking; who our attorney is; what our church is; how we voted in the last election; and perhaps a hundred questions on sexual activity. Perhaps the Bureau will require one household out of four to be psychoanalyzed."

Bill Rickenbacker got wonderfully carried away. He cited the Fourth Amendment affirming "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures," and closed by addressing the head of the Bureau of Census: "Snooper Chief, I plead the Fourth! You're so interested in my sewage, you'll be happy to know that I have sent you a sample under separate cover."

What happened was a federal trial in which Rickenbacker was given a 60-day suspended sentence and fined \$100. He appealed and lost, and the Supreme Court declined to intervene.

But a point had been made, and successive census inquiries have been more latitudinarian. You can decline to complete one of those 53-question forms by simply buying out of the exercise for a \$100 fine. This is not a subversive way of looking at it because the density of the statistical sampling is very much higher than needed. If one-half of the forms sent out were ignored, the findings would almost certainly not be less than reliably accurate.

Opposition to the collection of data when this is done without malice aforethought seems to this dissenter a barren form of protest. We all have Social Security numbers and passports. Should we care if the government also knows how many toilets we have, and whether we use gas or oil? *Pace* the holy memory of anti-Snoopchief hero Bill Rickenbacker—I say, give them the stuff. You don't need to feel you are complicit in a federal scam.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

■ THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER ■

FLORENCE KING

I NEVER knew how strained the quality of mercy could be until I read the "Advice for George W." roundup in NR's April 3 issue. It had the distinct sound of people whistling past the cemetery.

Even the most optimistic advice was shot through with tense reminders to do this or avoid doing that, to remember such-and-such but avoid thus-and-so, to go here but don't go there; while the various well-meant admonitions to be "active" and stay "on the attack" merged into a household hint about scooping up dropped ice cream in one piece before it loses its firmness and melts into the carpet.

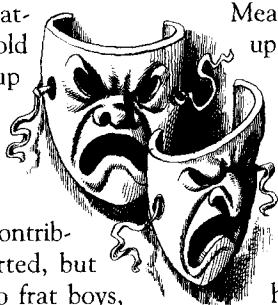
Some of the pessimistic contributors tried to be lighthearted, but their recurring allusions to frat boys, recommendations of "English-language-immersion lessons," and paternalistic reminders to "Stand up straight" and stop acting the class clown made him sound like someone who has to be wiped off before being sent out to mingle with guests.

Other pessimistic contributors were simply pessimistic. "Be real" is the end of the line for advice; once you have said that, it doesn't matter what else you say. The gloomiest pessimists made lists of all the things Dubya should do, then effectively took them all back. Using the poker player's metaphor for an impossible task, one said that even if Dubya did everything he was told, "he will still be drawing for an inside straight," while another ended his list of Do's with: "[I]f he doesn't, he's finished."

Were I advising Dubya, my first caution would be, "Be careful how you describe things, because you just might hit the nail on the head." This was the unfortunate result when he said he would not debate until fall, giving as his reason: "America is now going into a hibernation period when it comes to politics."

In other words, the Bores of Summer are upon us and there's no relief in sight. As long as Bradley was in, there was a

chance that a candidate would go crazy and pull a Sherwood Anderson, walking off the podium in mid-speech the way frustrated businessman Anderson walked out of his office in the middle of dictating a letter and became—what else?—a writer. It would be the best thing that could happen to us, forcing us to do something about our tortuous political process, but we'll have to wait for another time.



Meanwhile, somebody could liven up the campaign trail by training attack dogs to react to "reformer" and "results." America's whistle-stops would resemble the comedy skit about the economist whose dogs tore out throats, or not, depending upon whether they heard "stock" or "bullion."

Then his wife hosted her cooking club and all the girls started talking about "stock" and "bouillon."

In one sense, Dubya's language problems are less severe than Gore's. Everything that comes out of Gore's mouth sounds like the e-voice that says "You have mail!" but Dubya's utterances are entirely his own.

His English prepositions are straight out of a foreign-language lab: "America wants somebody not of Washington" sounds like a flailing student of French taking turns between *à* and *de* in hopes of getting at least some of them right.

His worst preposition problems have to do with body parts, e.g., "I don't have all the facts at my hand." Then there are the heart metaphors: Look at his heart . . . look in his heart . . . don't judge his heart . . . only he knows what's on [in, with, next to] his heart. An Aztec priest could settle this very quickly, and deliver, posthumously, the Hispanic vote.

His stabs at parallelisms land him in *mot juste* trouble: "Our party is enthused and excited. John deserves credit for bringing people into the party, and I deserve a lot of credit for exciting the party." Unnerving the party, yes; agitating the party, yes; but not exciting the party.

His most interesting verbal tic has gone unnoticed, though it surely is

unique in the annals of blue-blooded scions: He sounds as if he is trying to "better" himself. His overexacting pronunciation of the "t" in "Clint-ton" exemplifies the habit of the socially unsure of going overboard in polishing their diction. In Dubya's case, it's more likely a subconscious way of achieving the verbal precision that he knows eludes him. By the same token, clinging to poetic archaisms such as "amongst" and "oftentimes" may make him feel more literary than he knows himself to be.

The heat he has taken over his anti-intellectualism may have given him a shadow slogan. "A Goof-off with Guilts," but his efforts to atone only make him sound even more like a middle-class striver, as in his latest utterance, when he changed pronouns in midstream: "You cannot lead America to a positive tomorrow with revenge on one's mind." There's pathos here, but the average Reagan Democrat will hear nothing but a Yalie putting on airs.

Dubya's most worrisome speech habit concerns something more important than making the dean's list. People plagued by crippling self-doubt invariably give themselves away with cockiness and flippancy. Dubya's displays of these have been widely noted, but another compensatory technique of the self-doubter that has gone unremarked is his use of "double emphasis."

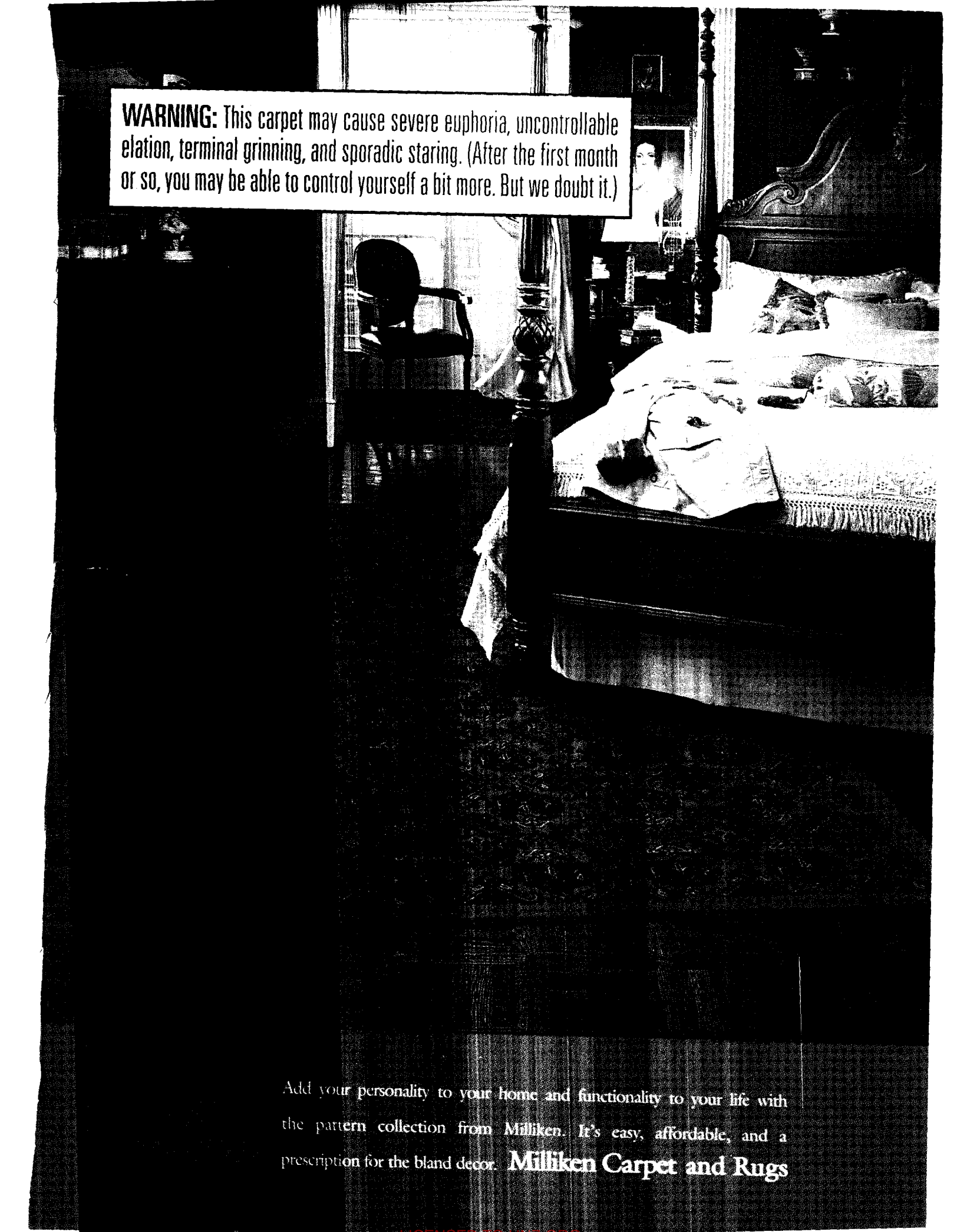
Asked if McCain's candidacy had damaged the GOP, he replied: "I don't think the fracture is much of a fracture. I really don't."

Answering Forbes's criticism, he said: "I've got a good strong record. I've done well in office. I've performed."

To tell when he's trying to convince himself, look for the print media's insertion of "he added," as in his defense of his Bob Jones appearance: "I gave the right speech," he added. "It always comes after he has rattled off five or six other things he did right."

I have some advice for him. He should stop talking about being "energized." Nobody is energized, we're all prostrate and ready for the Second Coming because what this country needs is a Redeemer: with Results. **NR**

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WARNING: This carpet may cause severe euphoria, uncontrollable elation, terminal grinning, and sporadic staring. (After the first month or so, you may be able to control yourself a bit more. But we doubt it.)

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